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Kramer

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(54) **INDEXABLE CUTTING TOOL INSERT FOR CUTTING TOOLS**

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This patent is subject to a terminal disclaimer.

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(22) Filed: **Mar. 30, 2009**

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Related U.S. Application Data

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(51) **Int. Cl.**
B23B 27/16 (2006.01)
B23C 5/20 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **407/113; 407/66**

(58) **Field of Classification Search** **407/34, 407/42, 51, 53, 61, 62, 63, 67, 66, 113-117**
See application file for complete search history.

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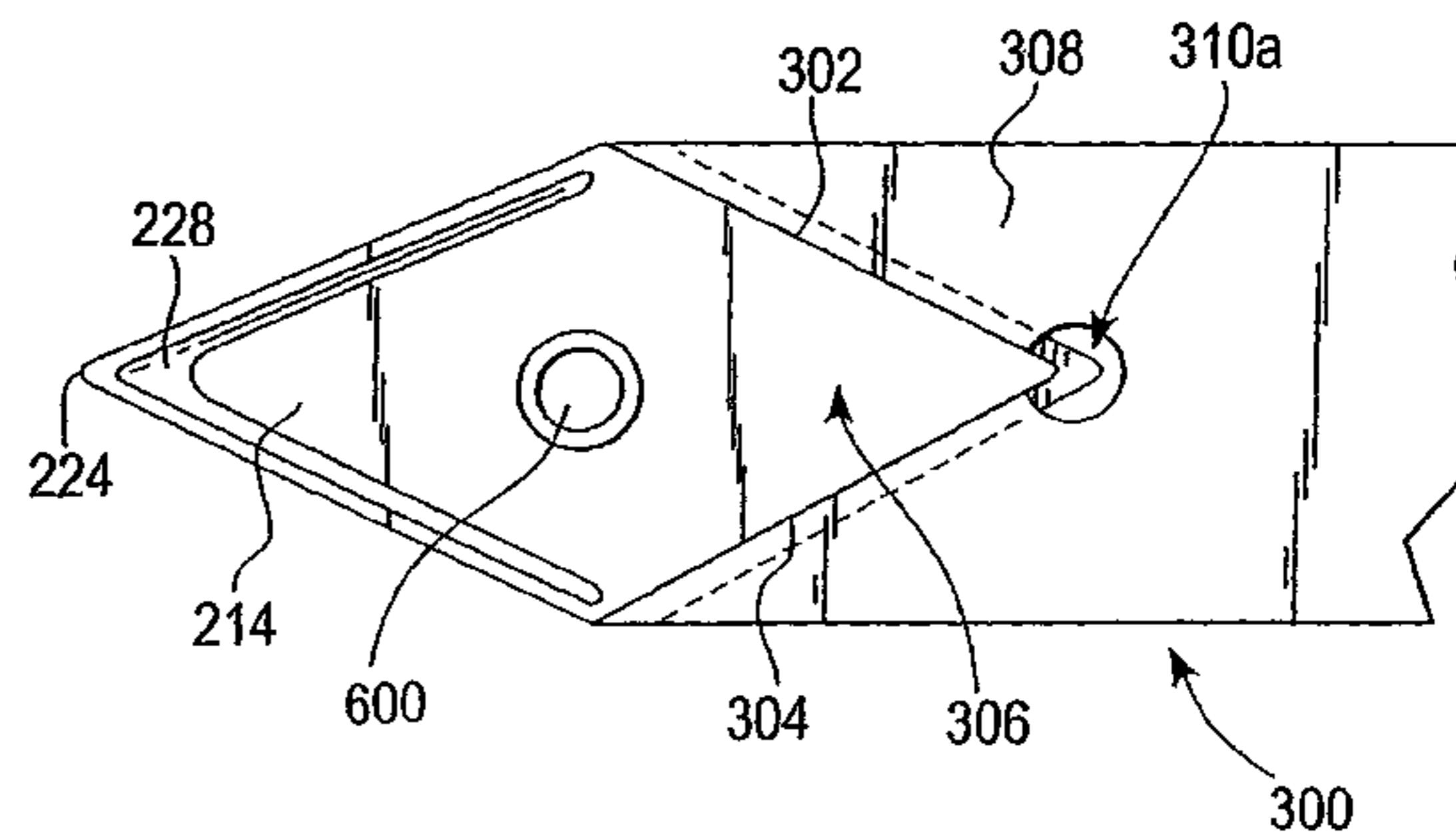
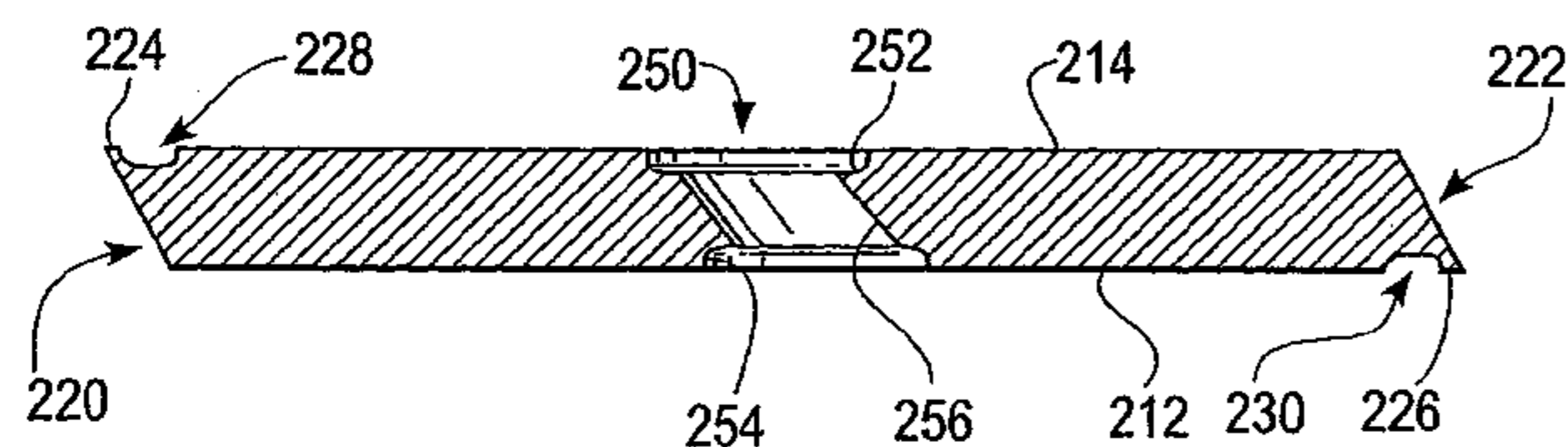
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

An insert is disclosed for use in cutting tool applications having two major faces and at least two cutting edges. The insert is indexable by repositioning the cutting insert from one face to the other face. The inserts may be mounted in a seat formed in a fixed cutting tool. The seat has a major seating surface for mounting the insert and for receiving a retainer at a predetermined angle. In one form, the seat may also have dovetail walls oriented to engage side walls of the insert and to reduce the shear force against the retainer during contact between the insert and a rotating workpiece. The fixed tool has reliefs and a tip pocket to protect an unused cutting edge on the insert.

16 Claims, 16 Drawing Sheets



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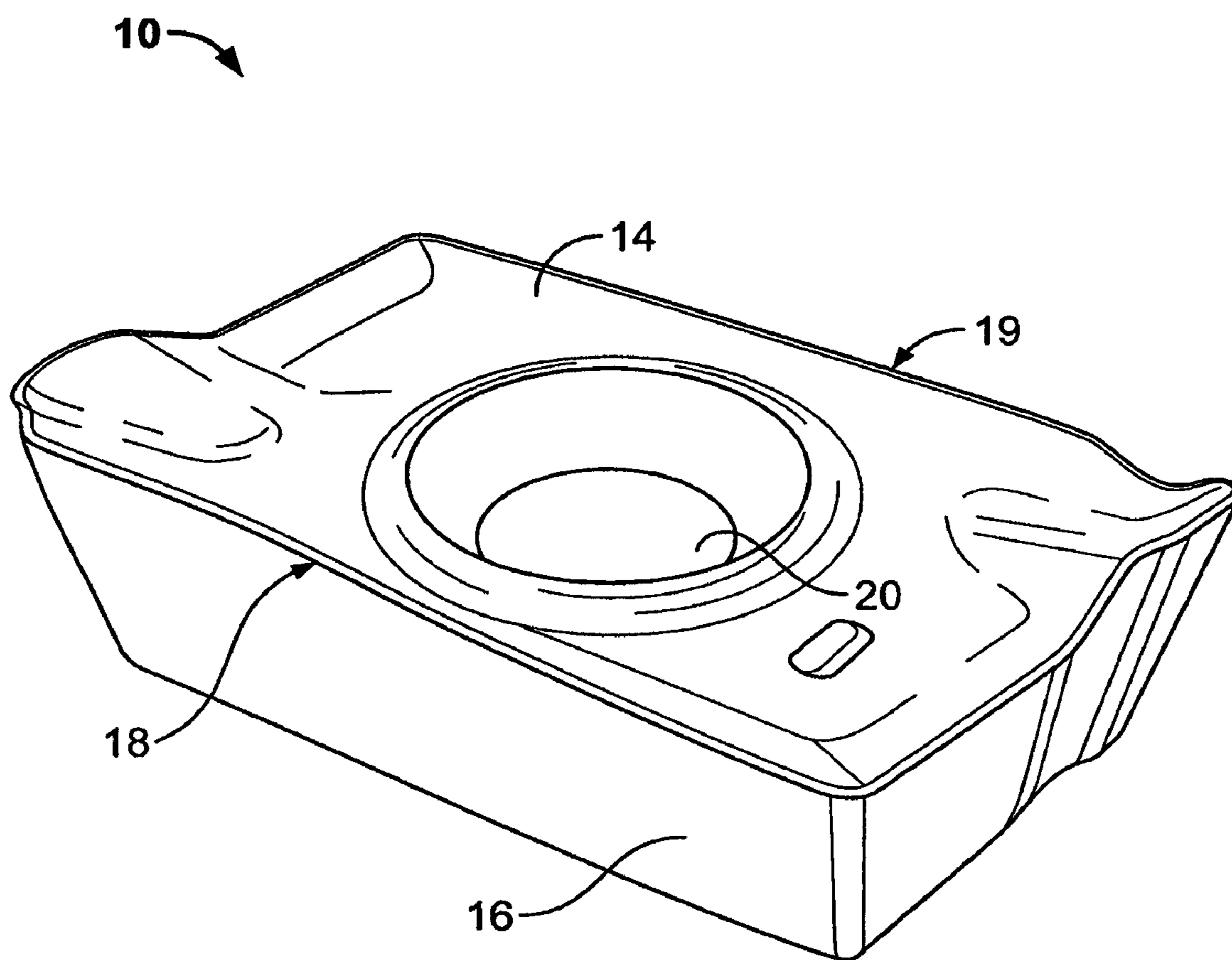


FIG. 1
(Prior Art)

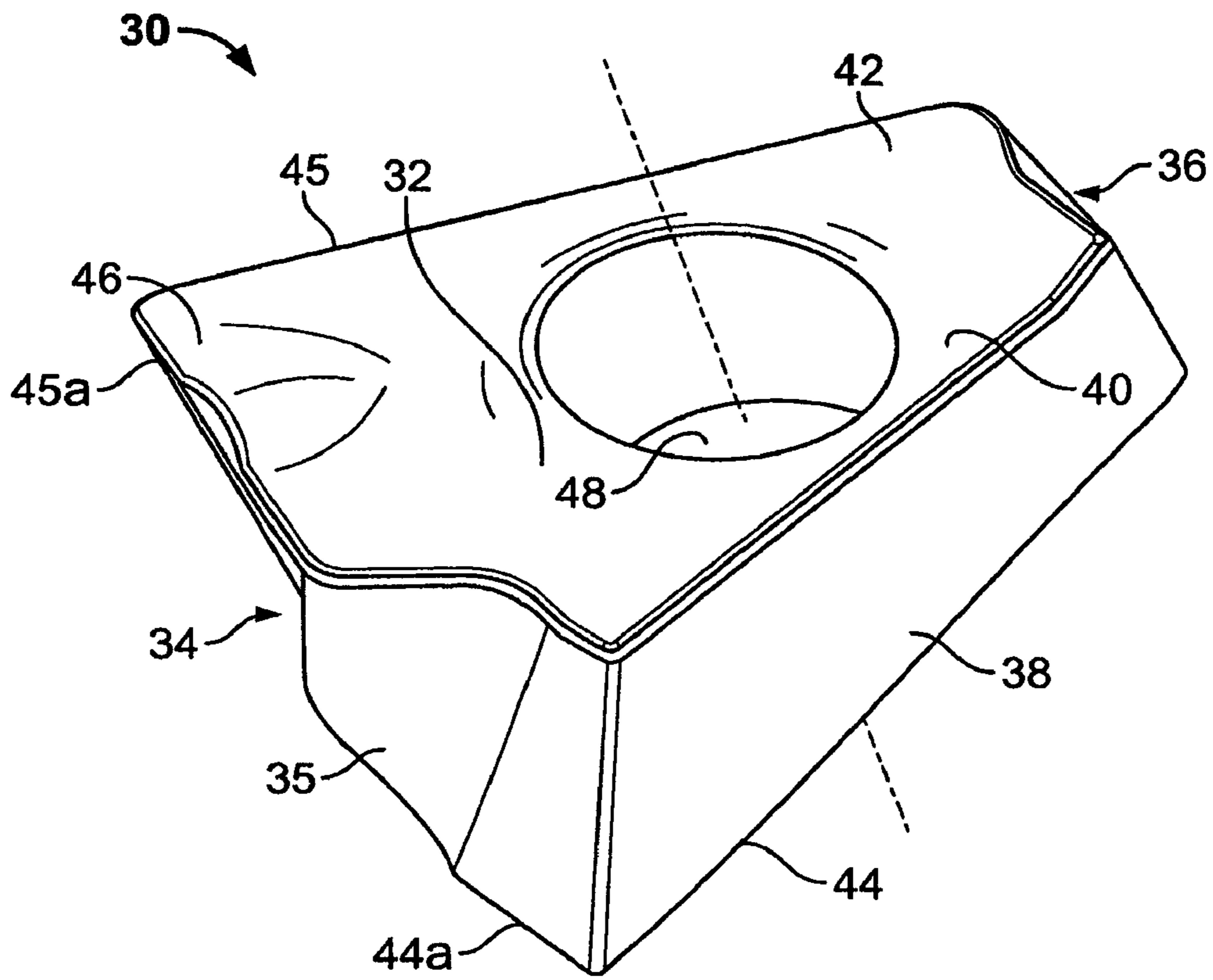


FIG. 2

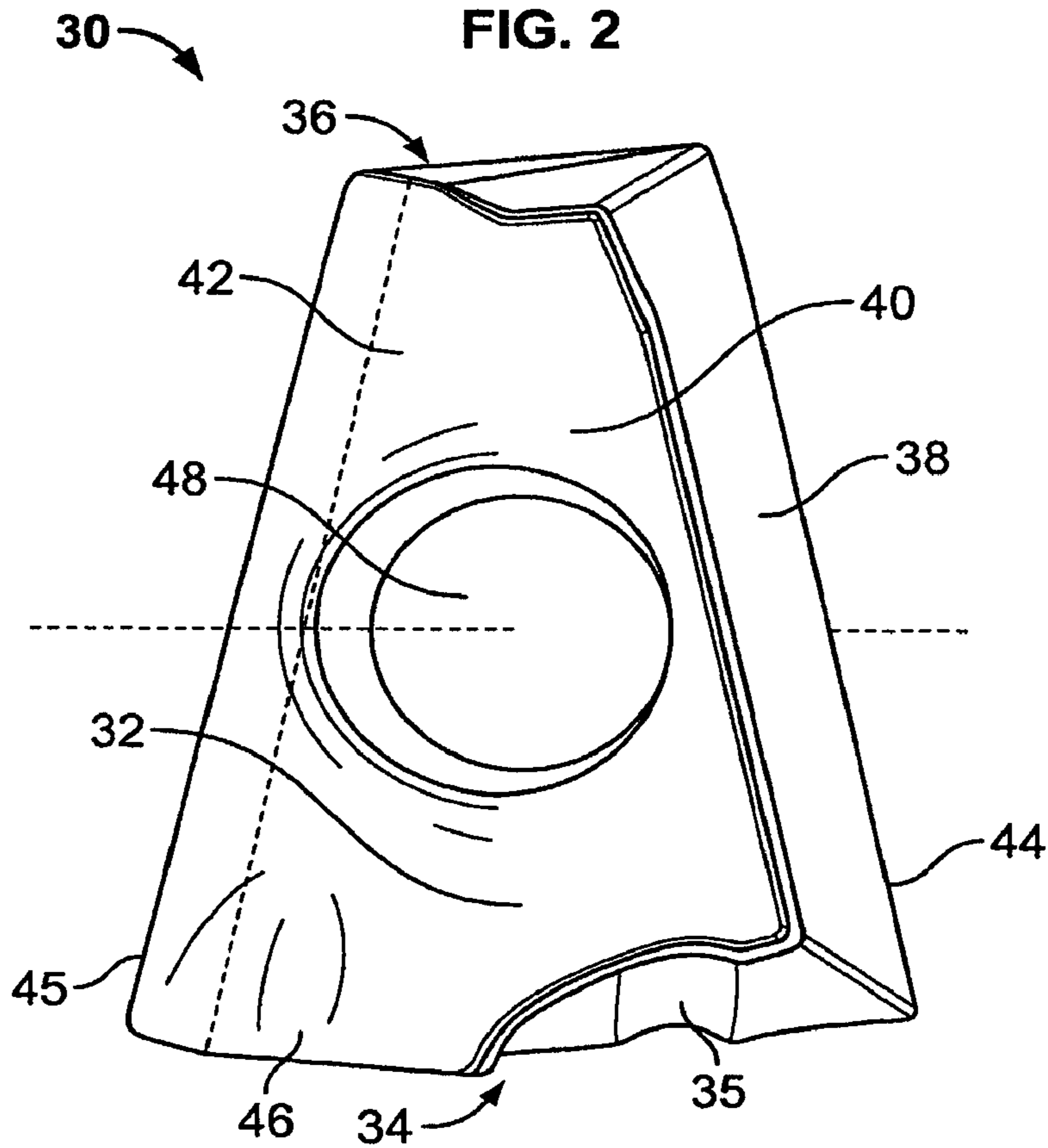


FIG. 3

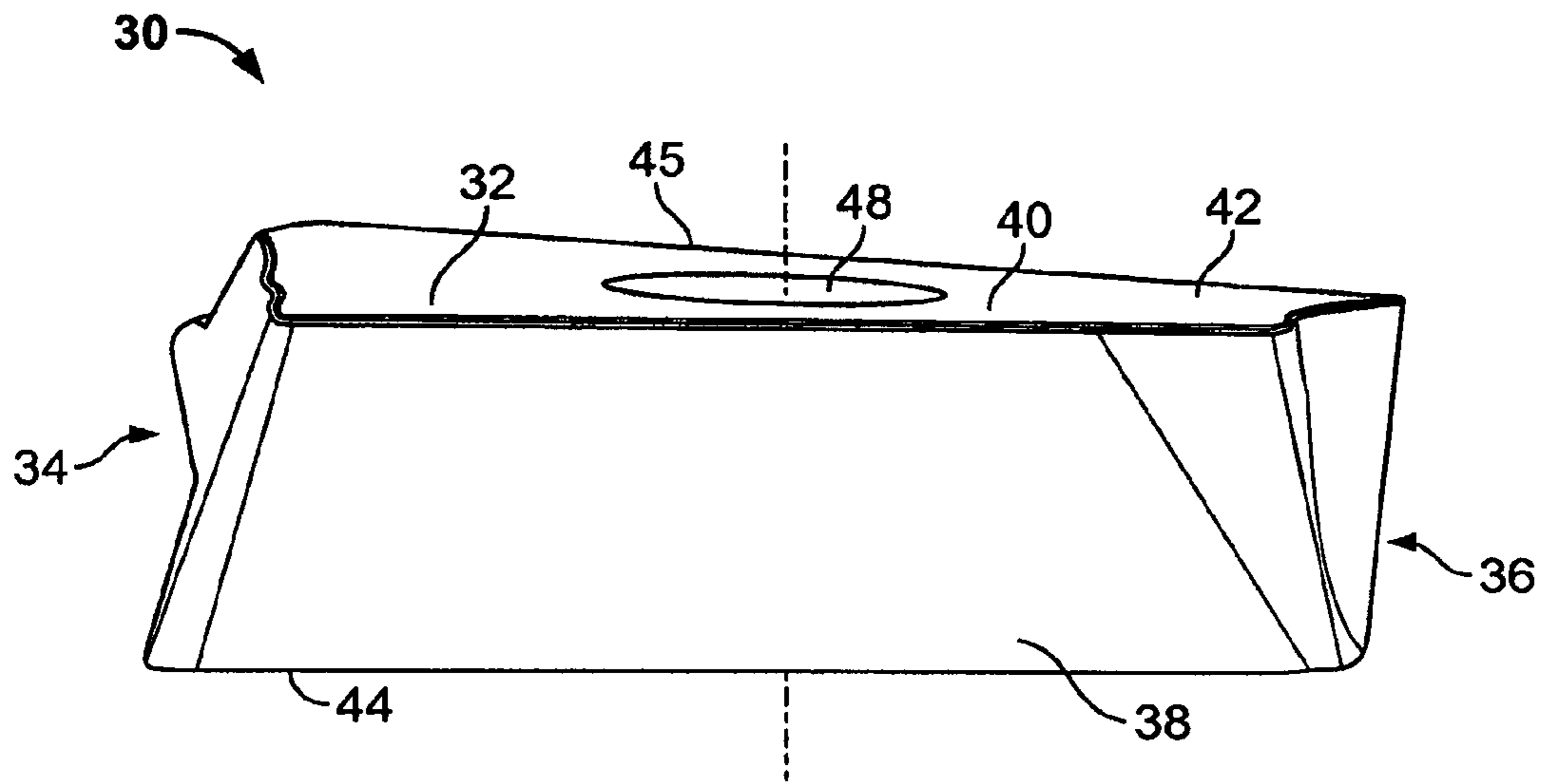


FIG. 4

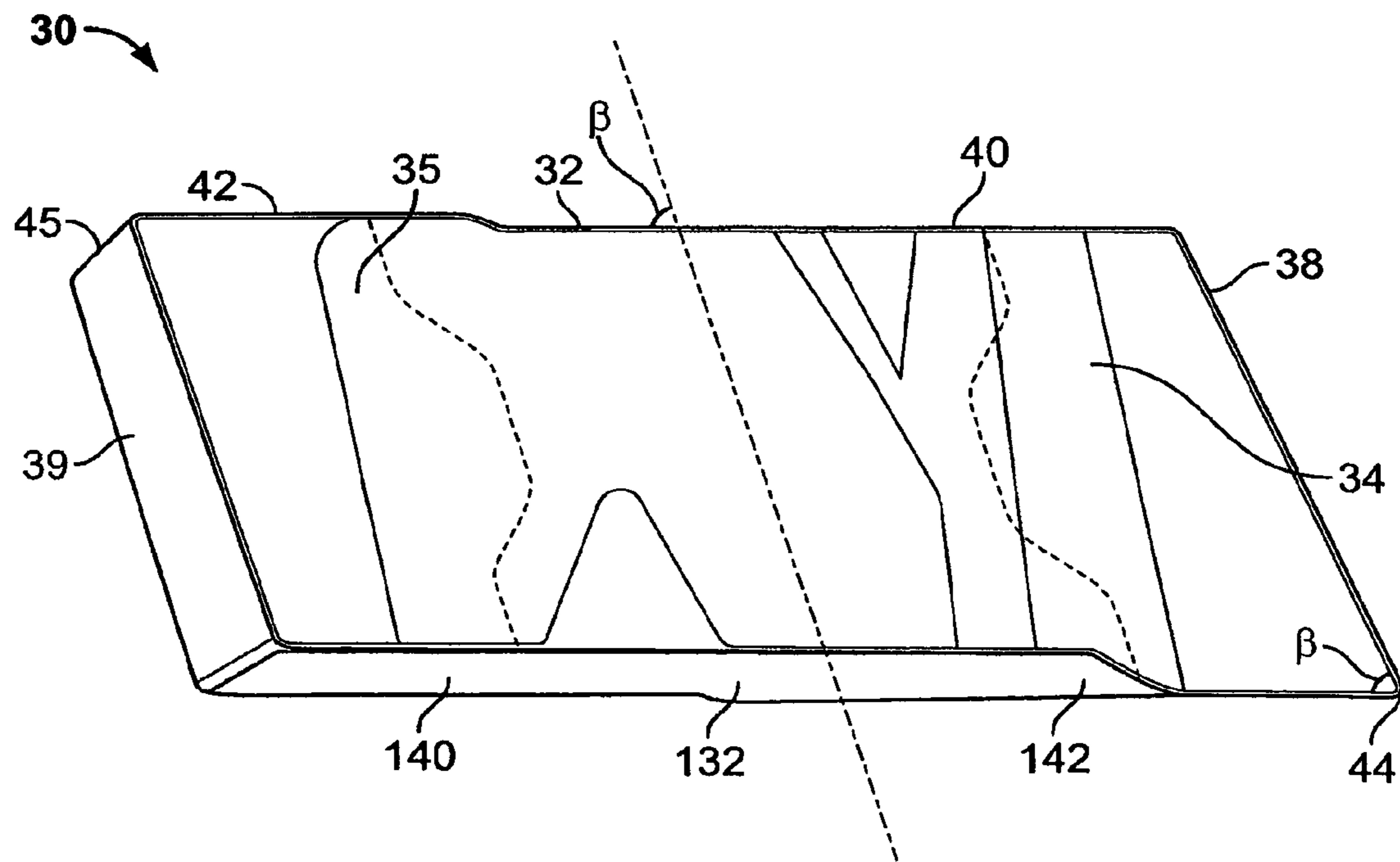


FIG. 5

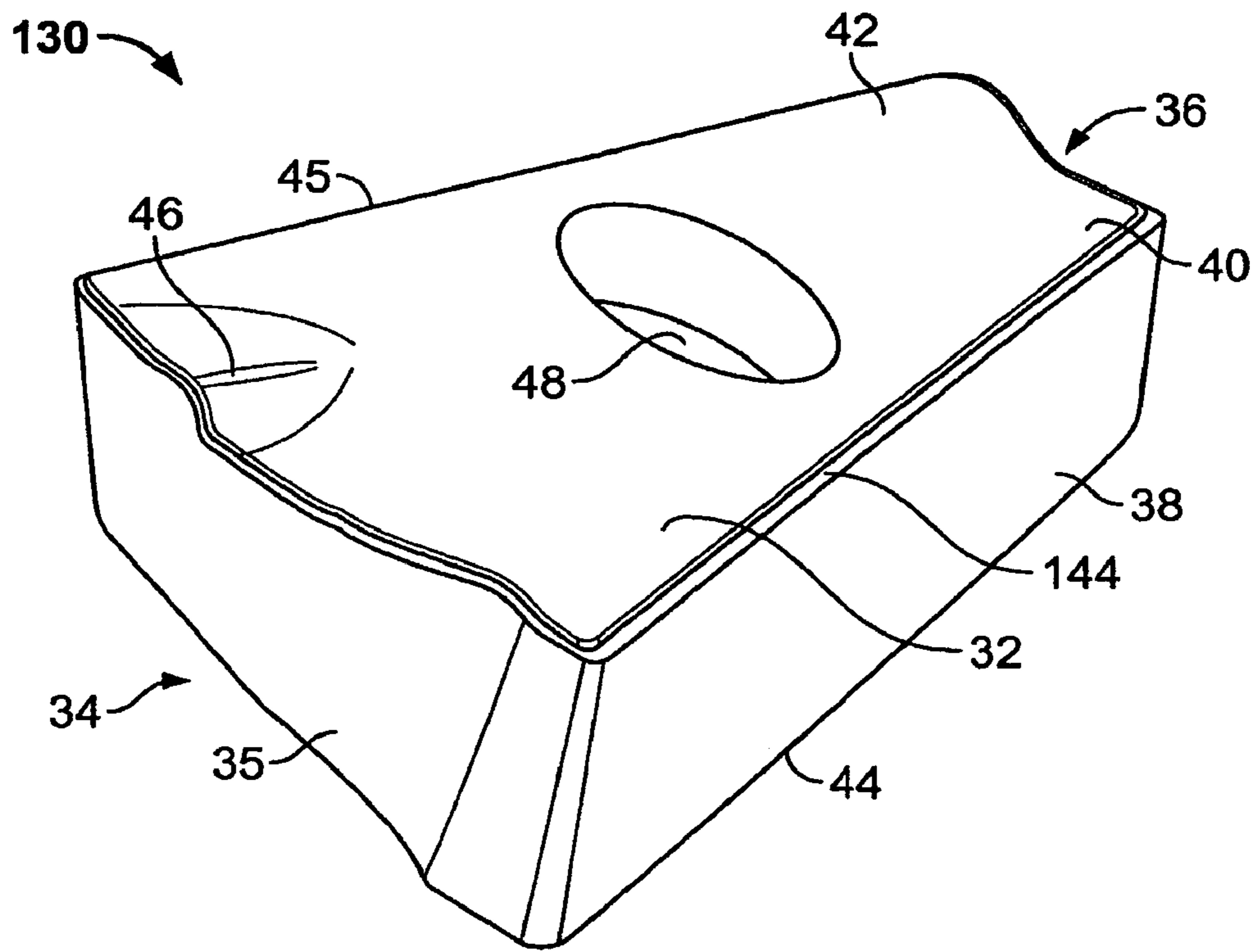


FIG. 6

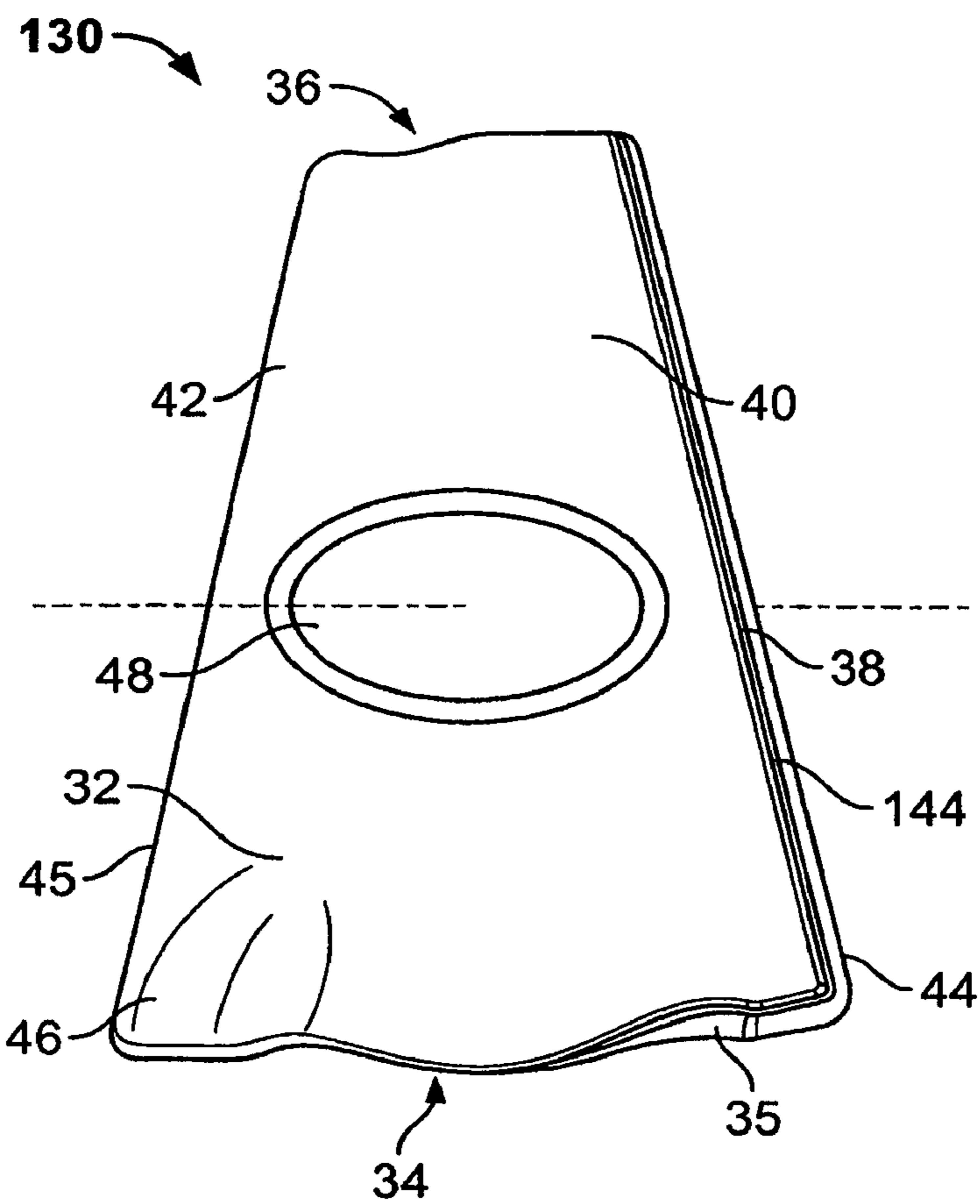


FIG. 7

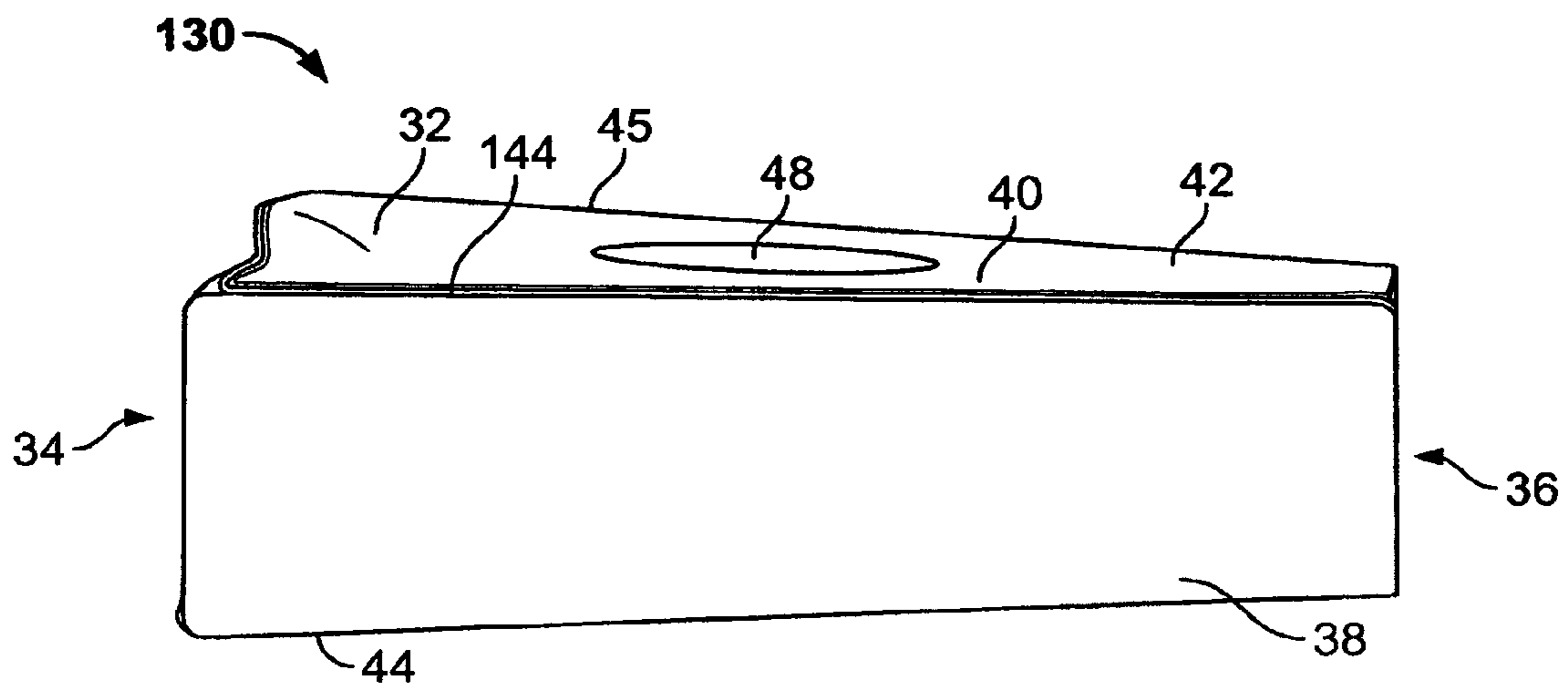


FIG. 8

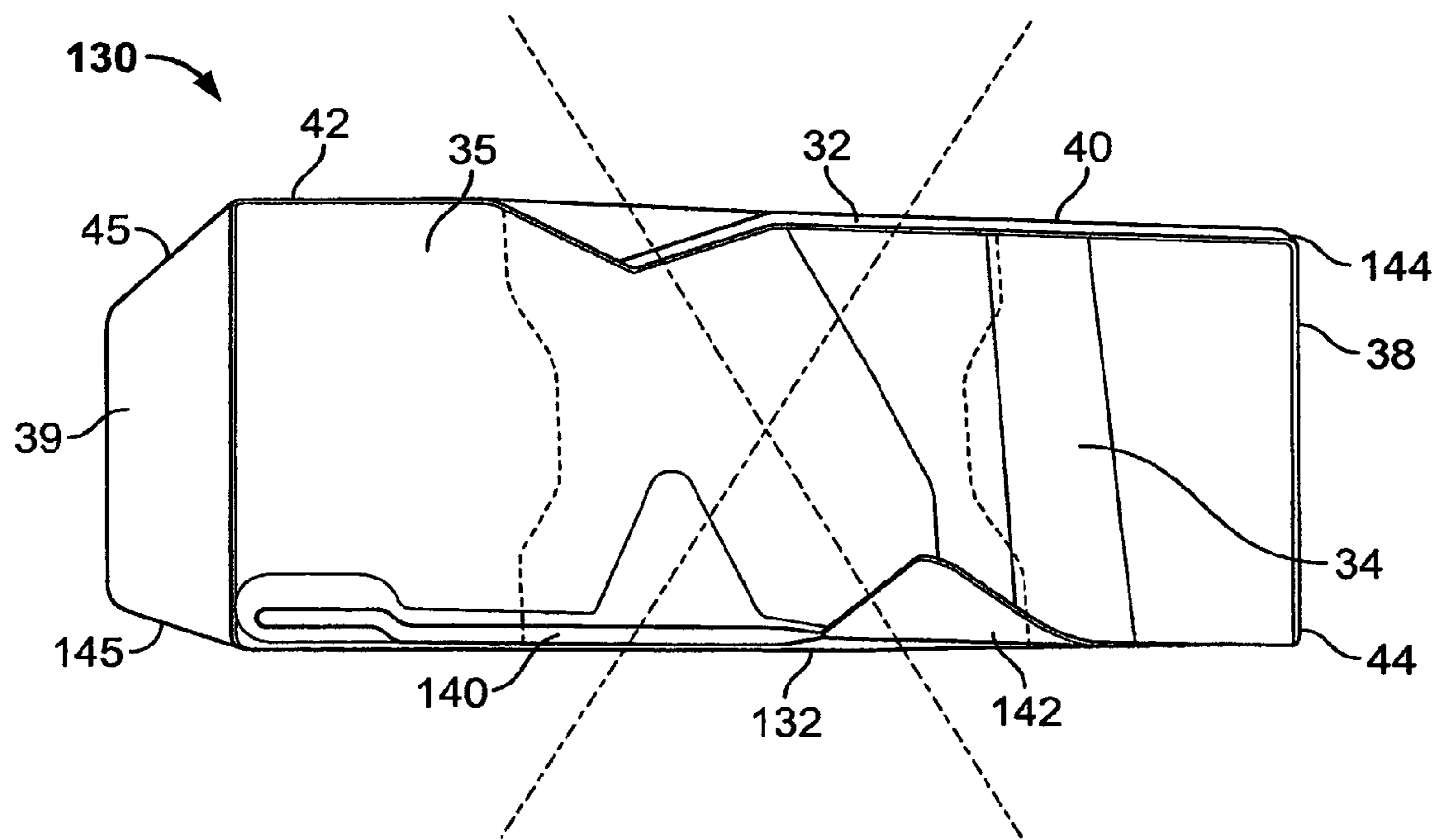


FIG. 9

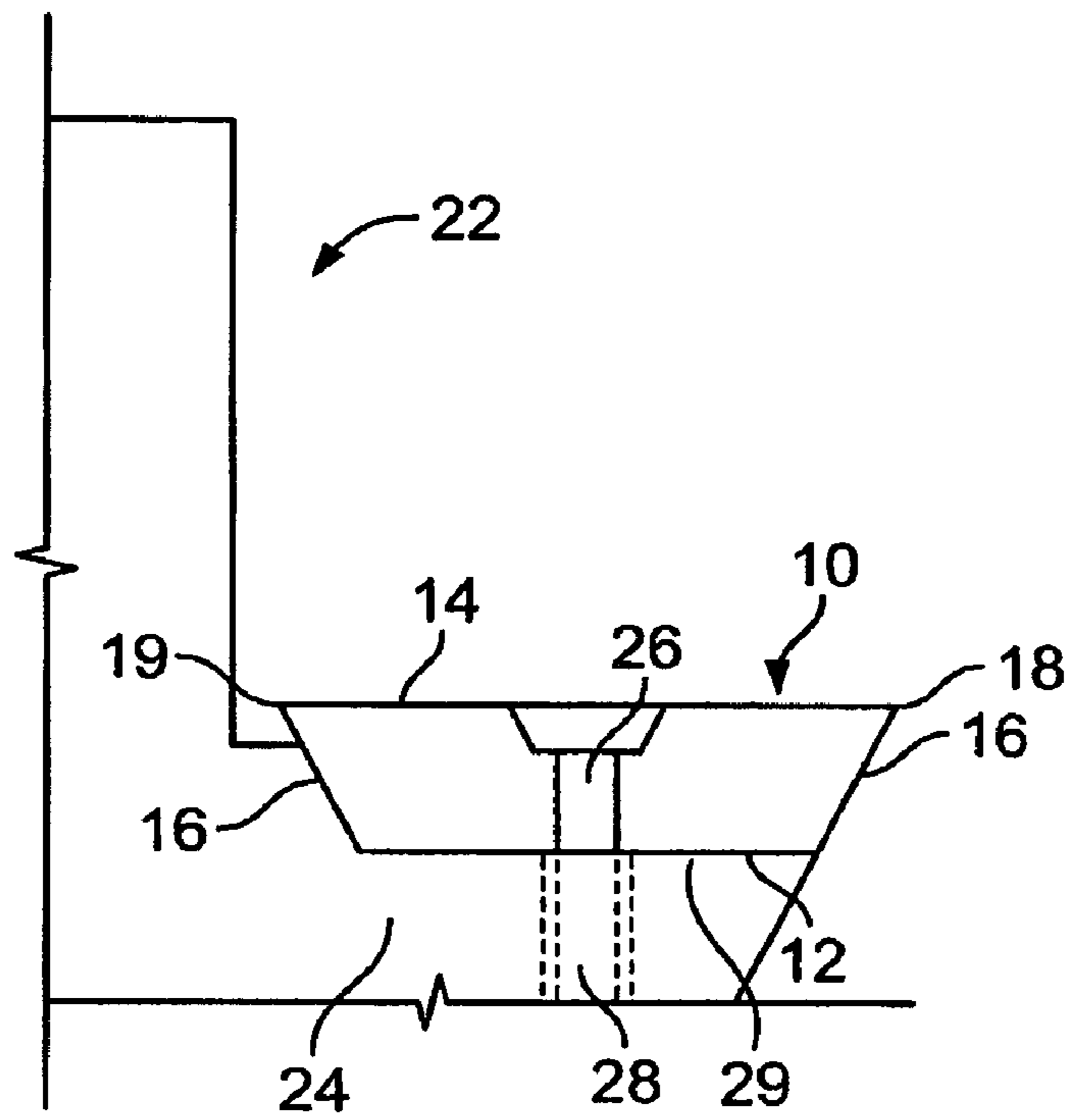


FIG. 10
(Prior Art)

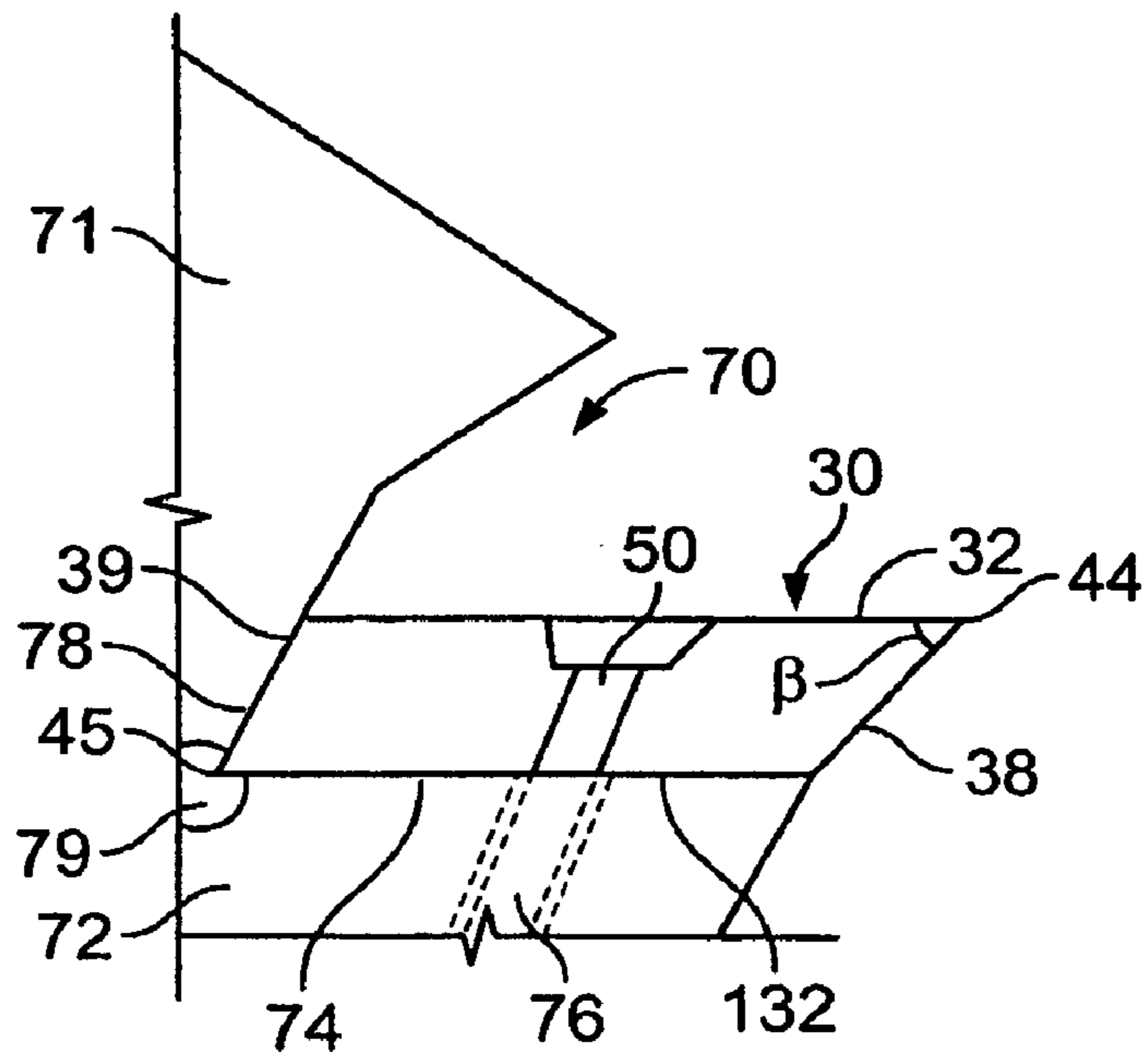


FIG. 11

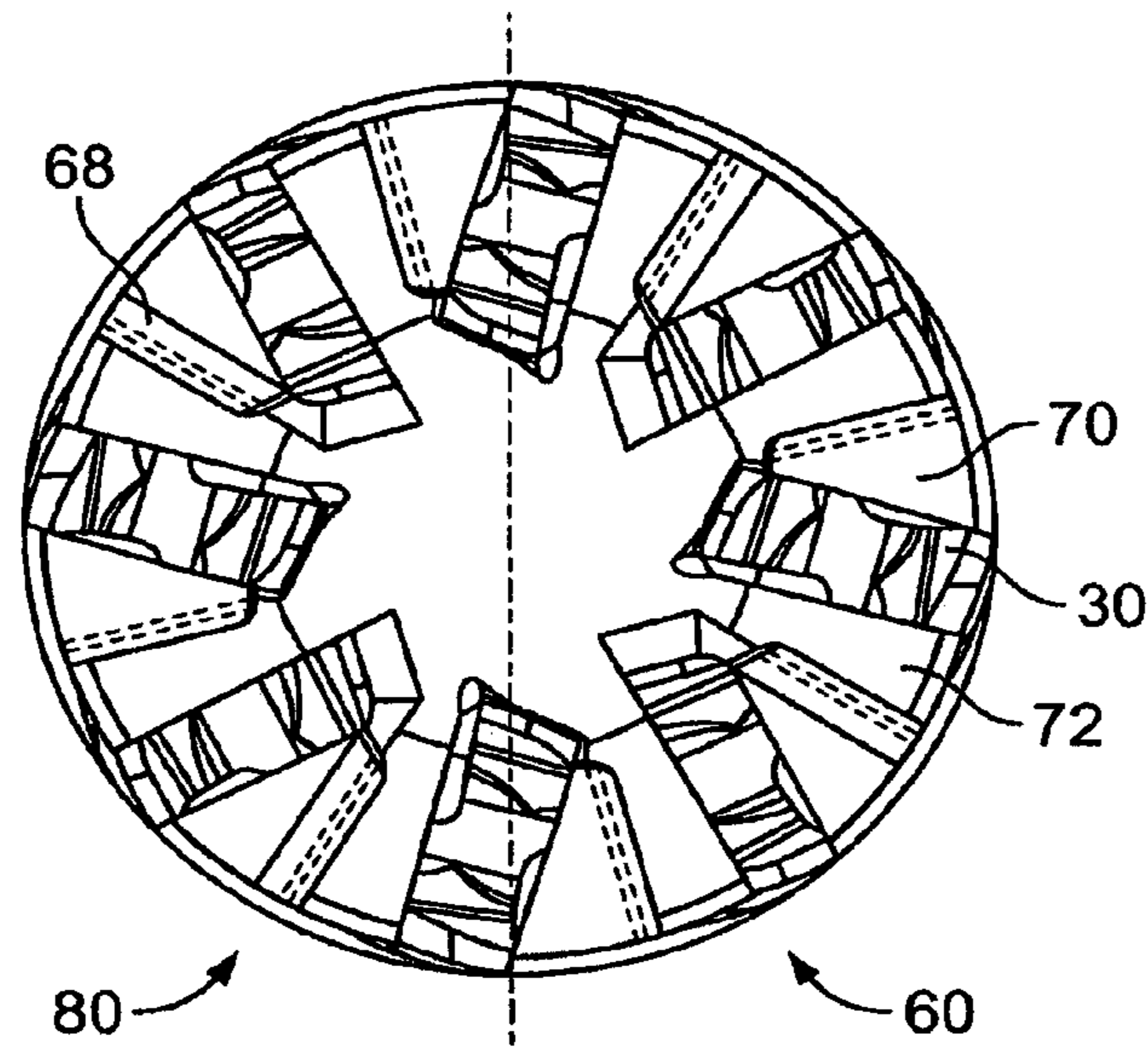


FIG. 12

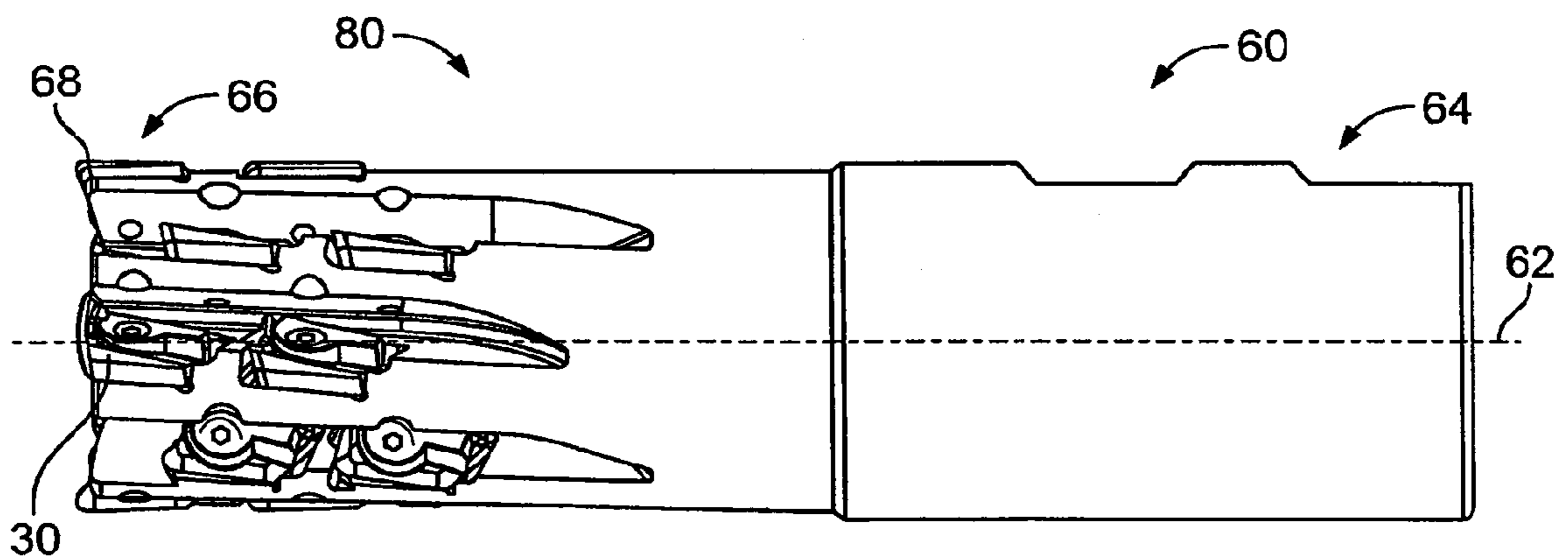


FIG. 13

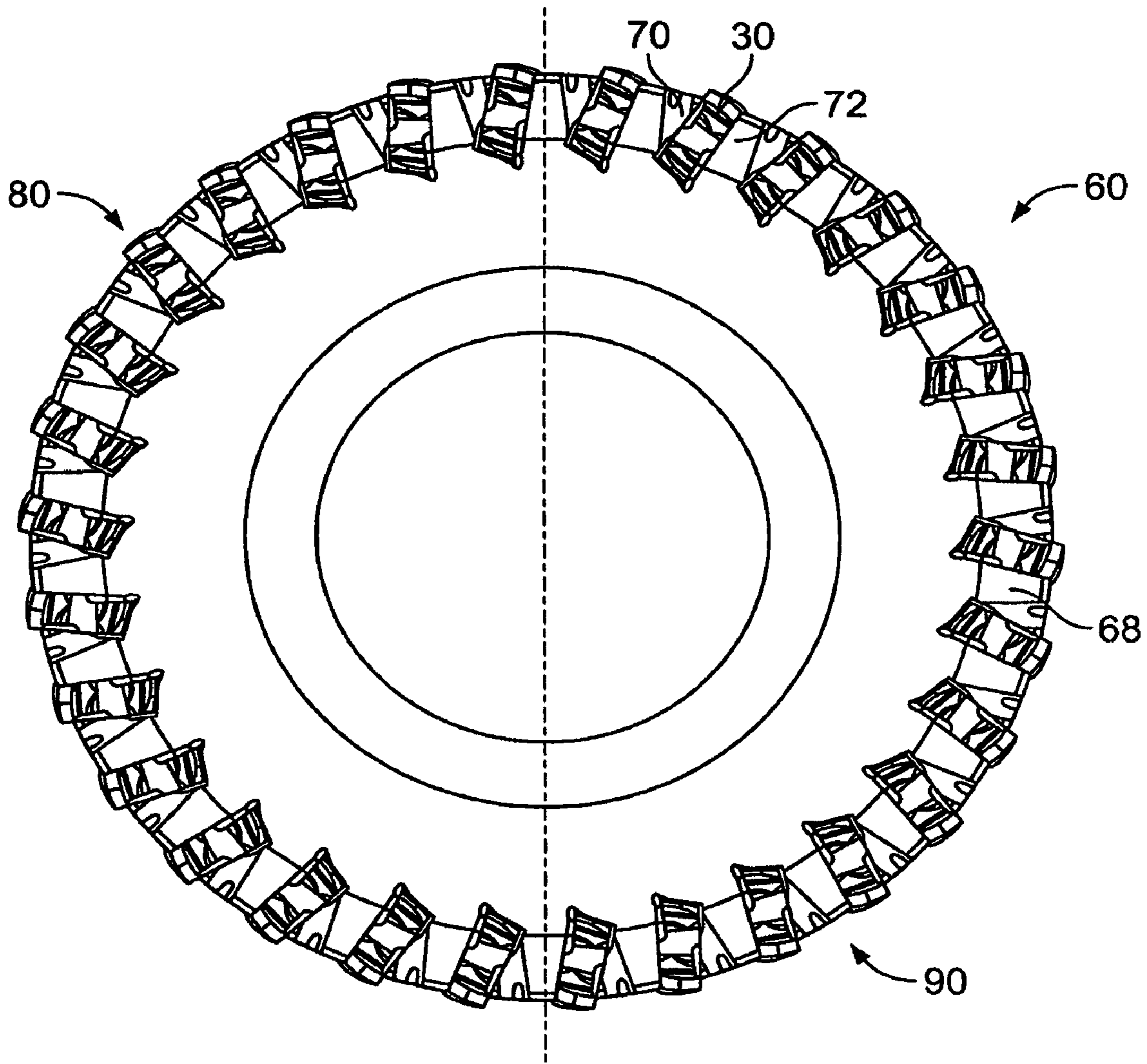


FIG. 14

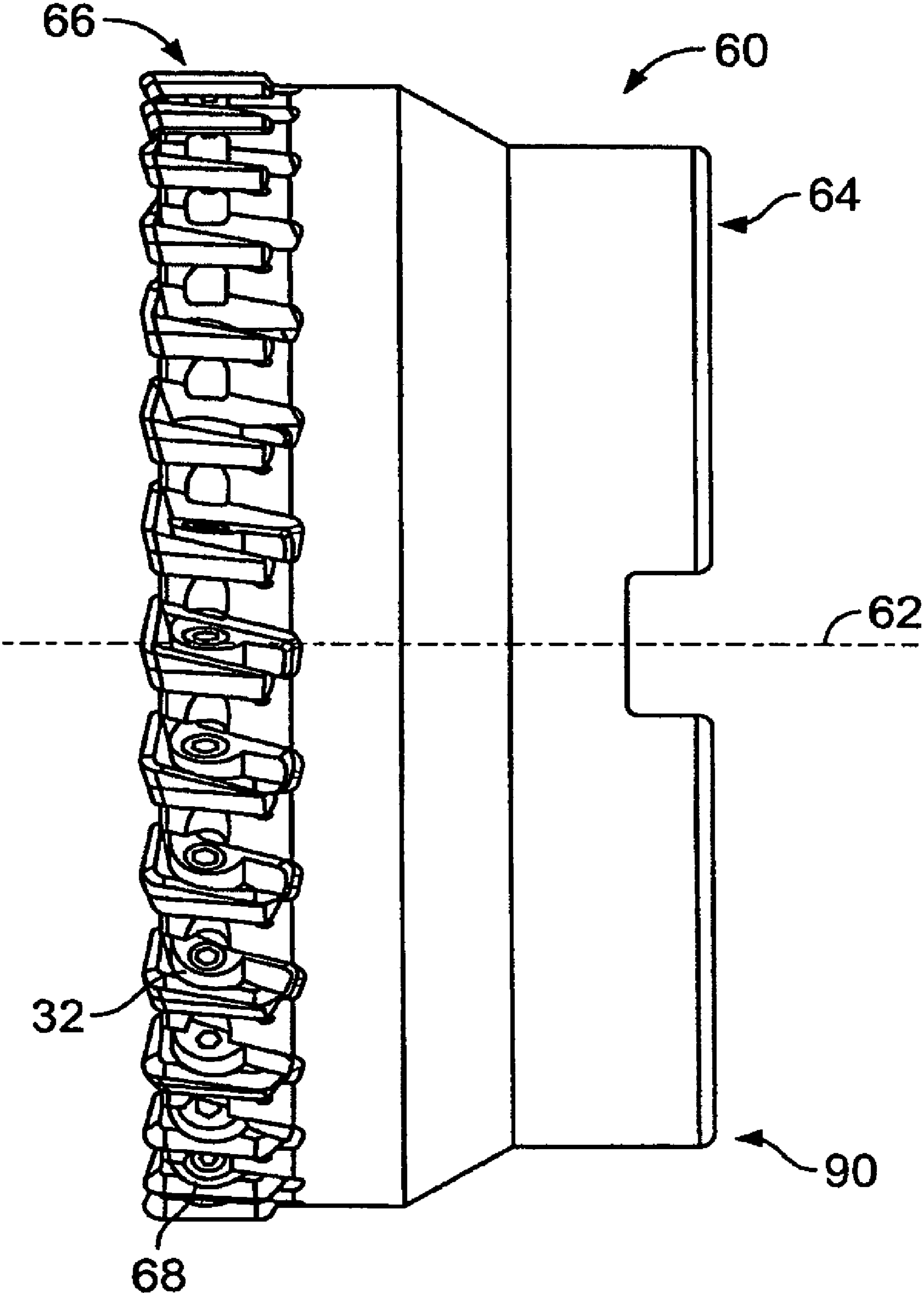


FIG. 15

FIG. 16

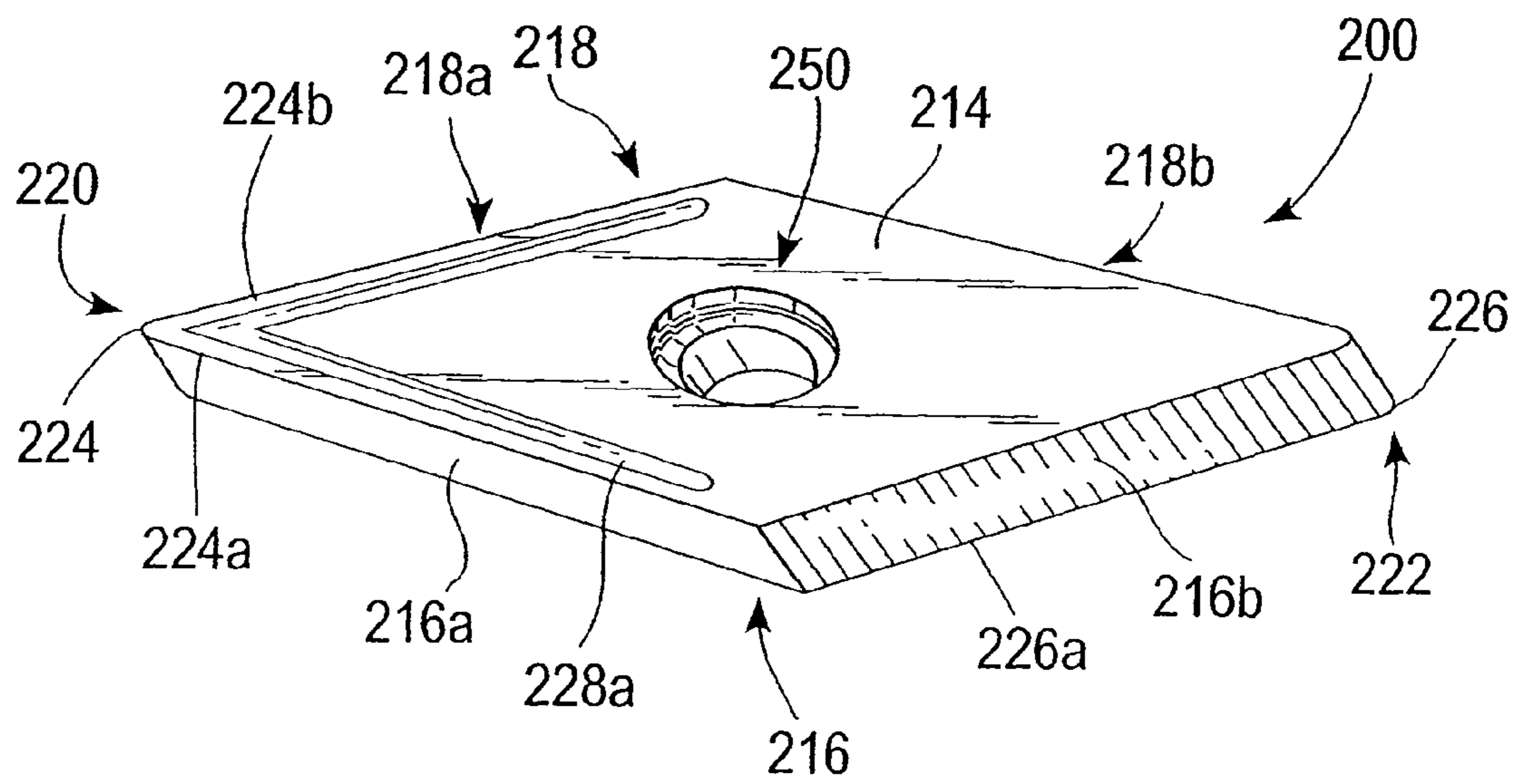


FIG. 17

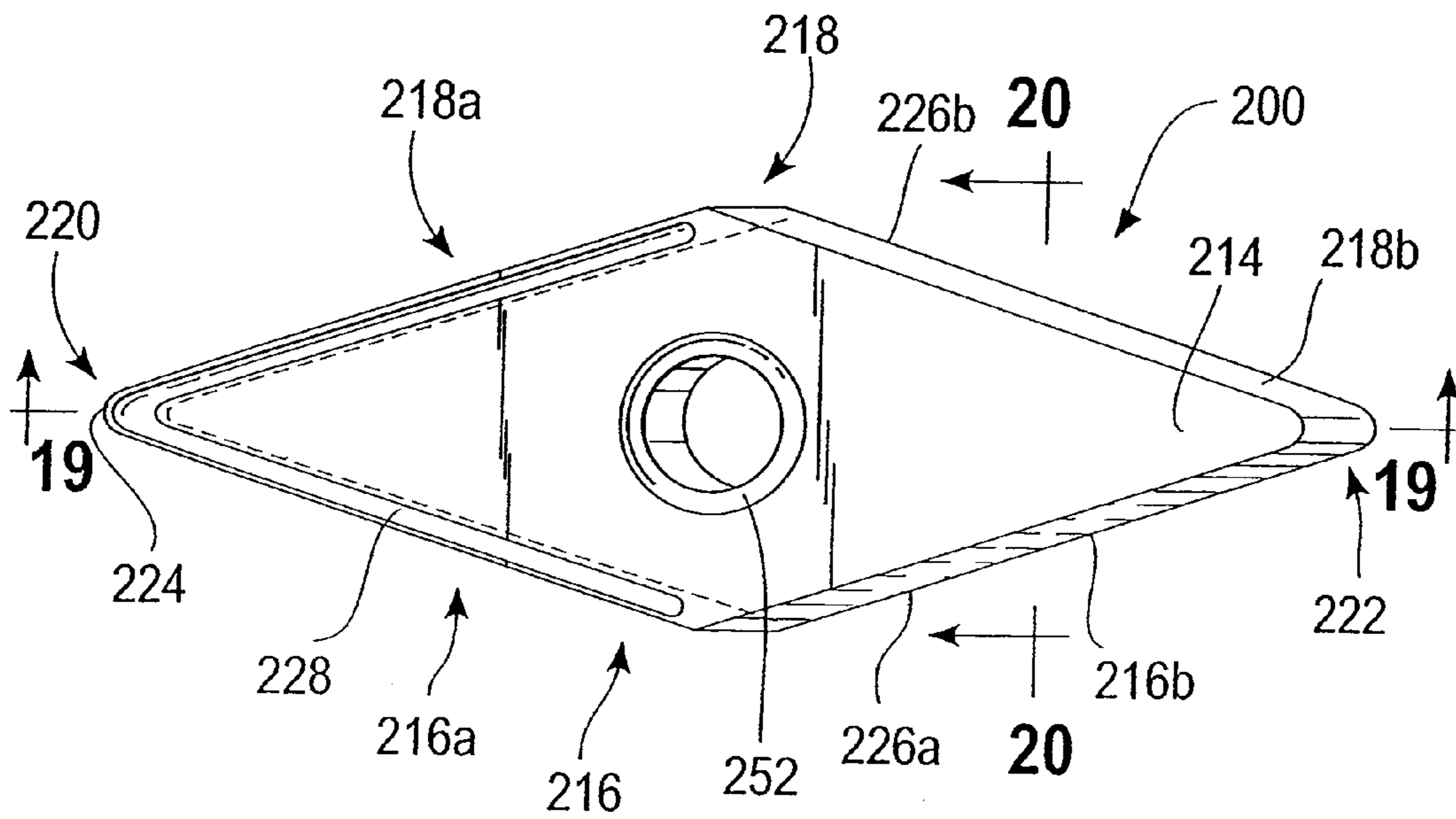


FIG. 18

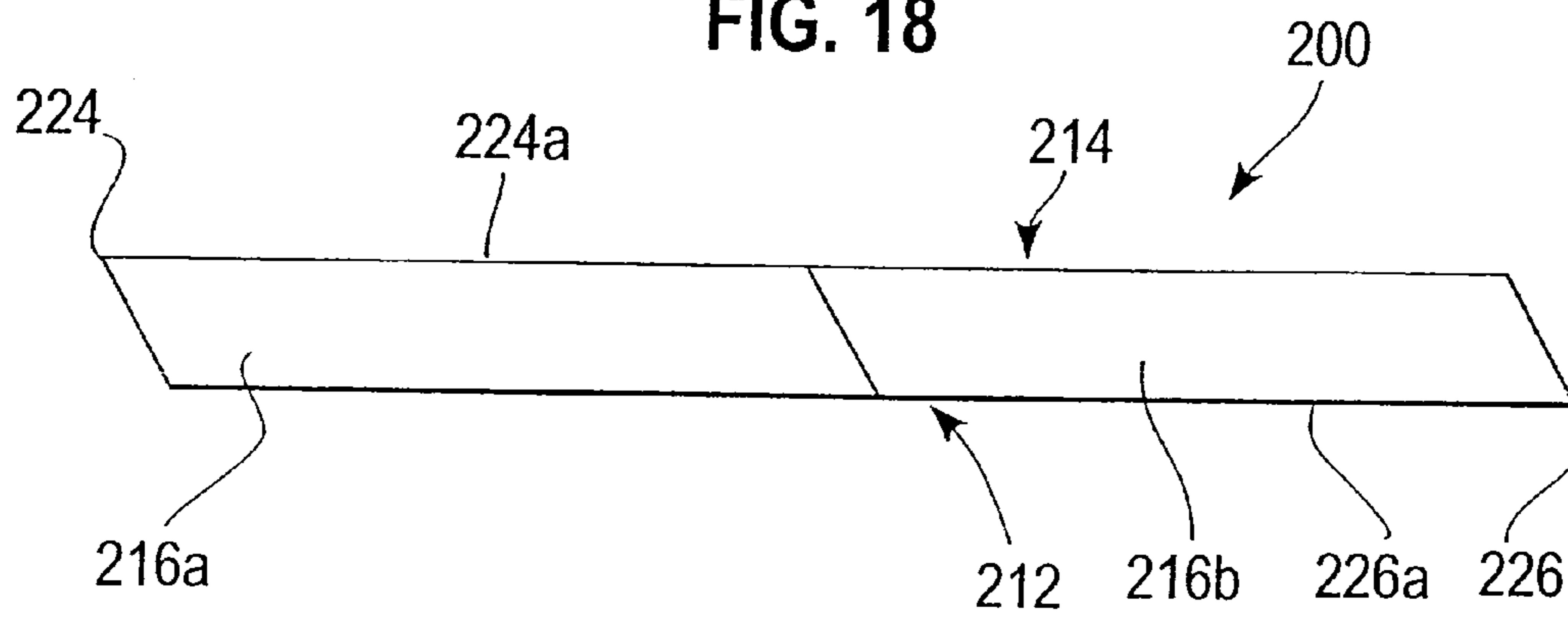


FIG. 19

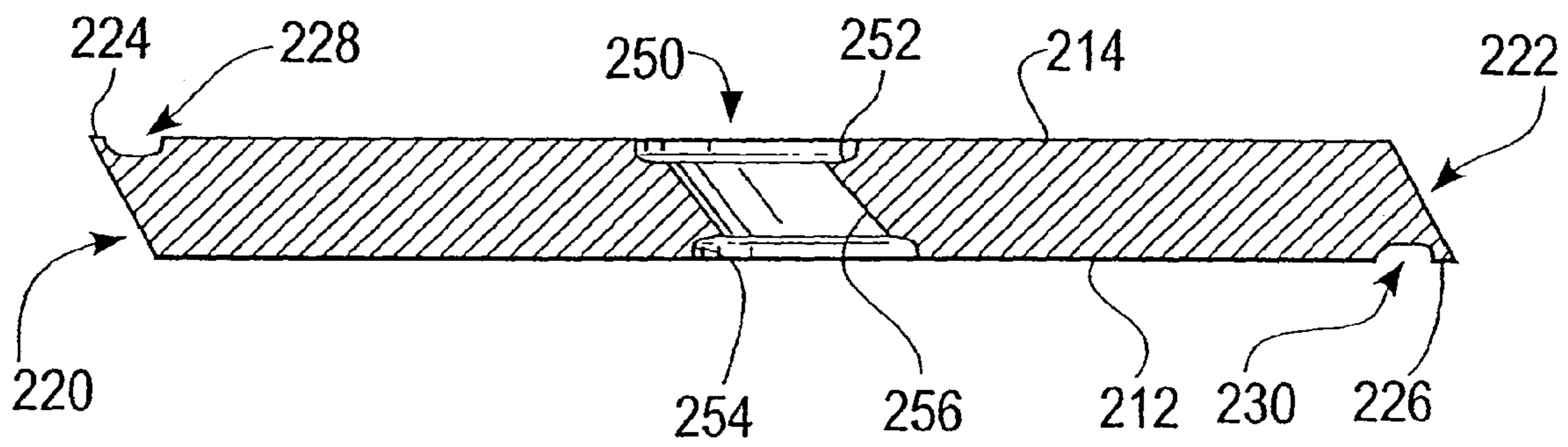


FIG. 20

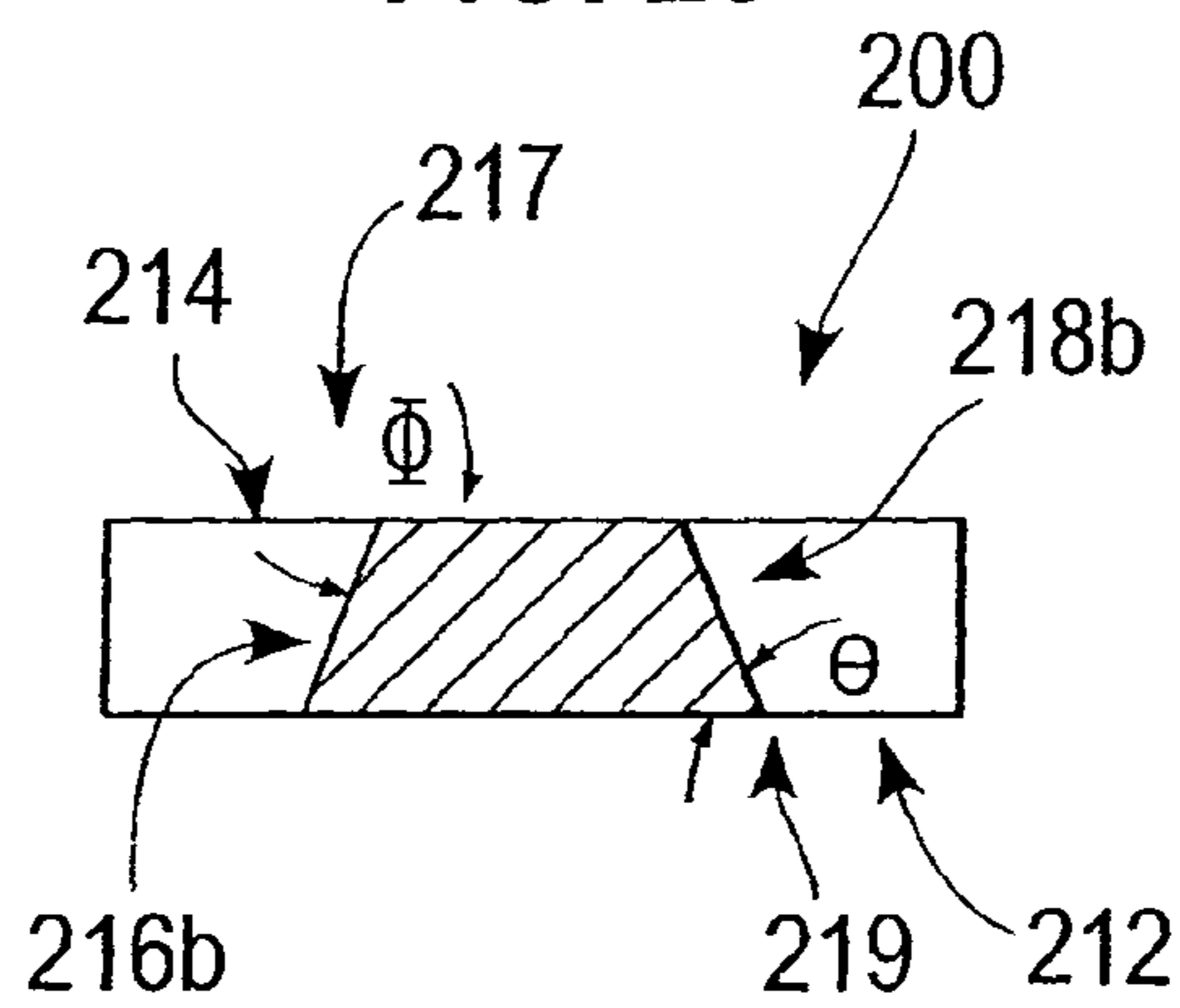


FIG. 21

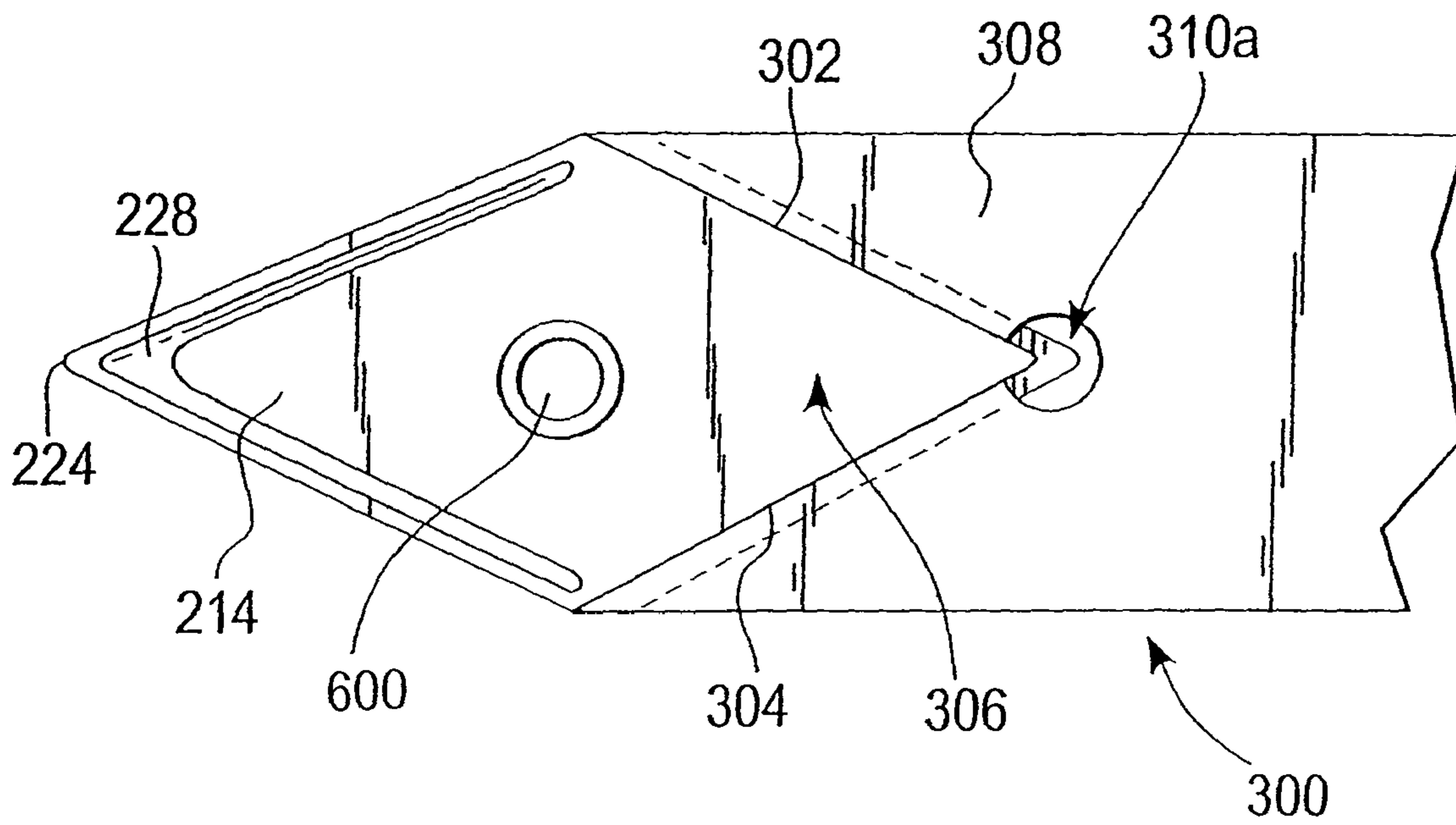


FIG. 22

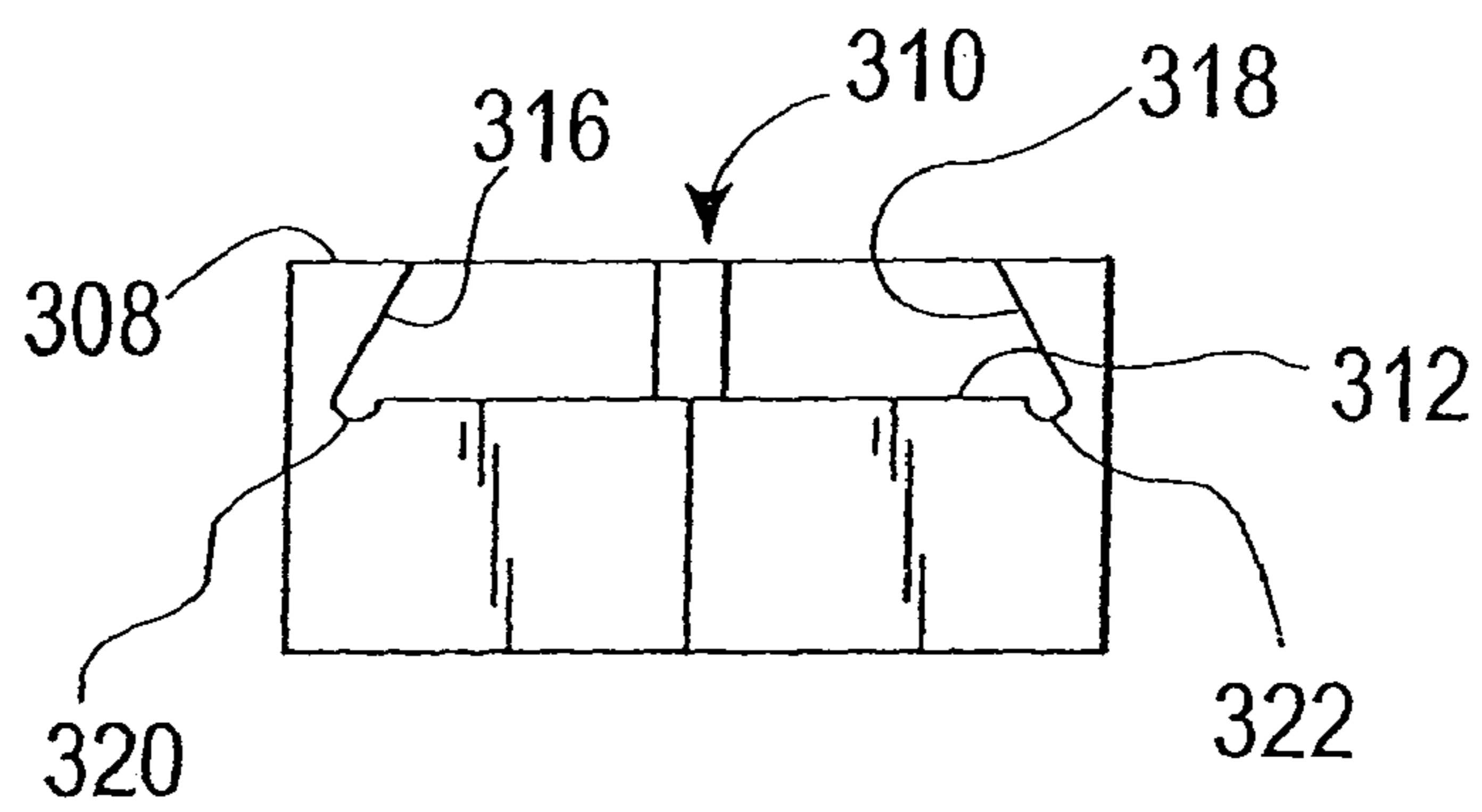


FIG. 23

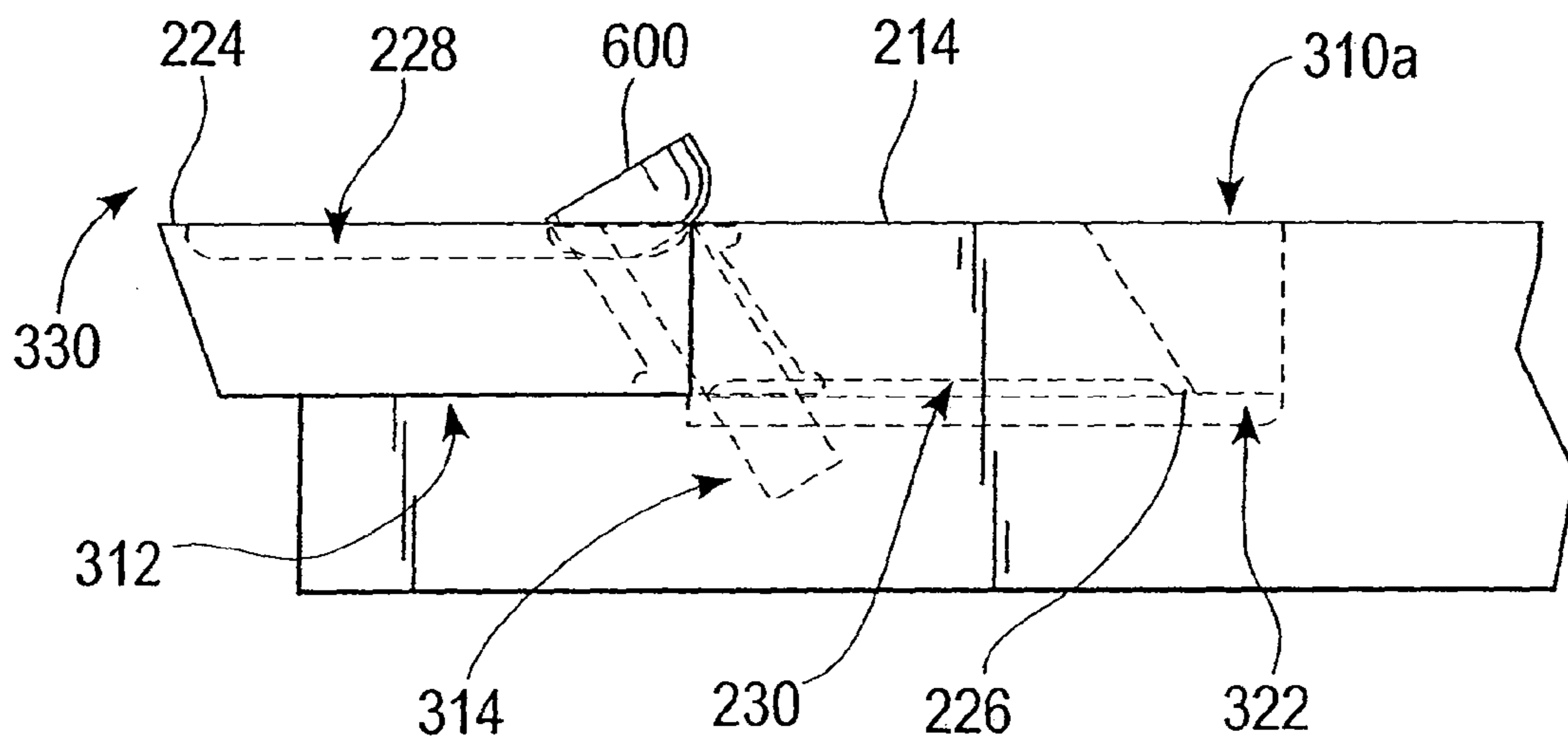


FIG. 24
PRIOR ART

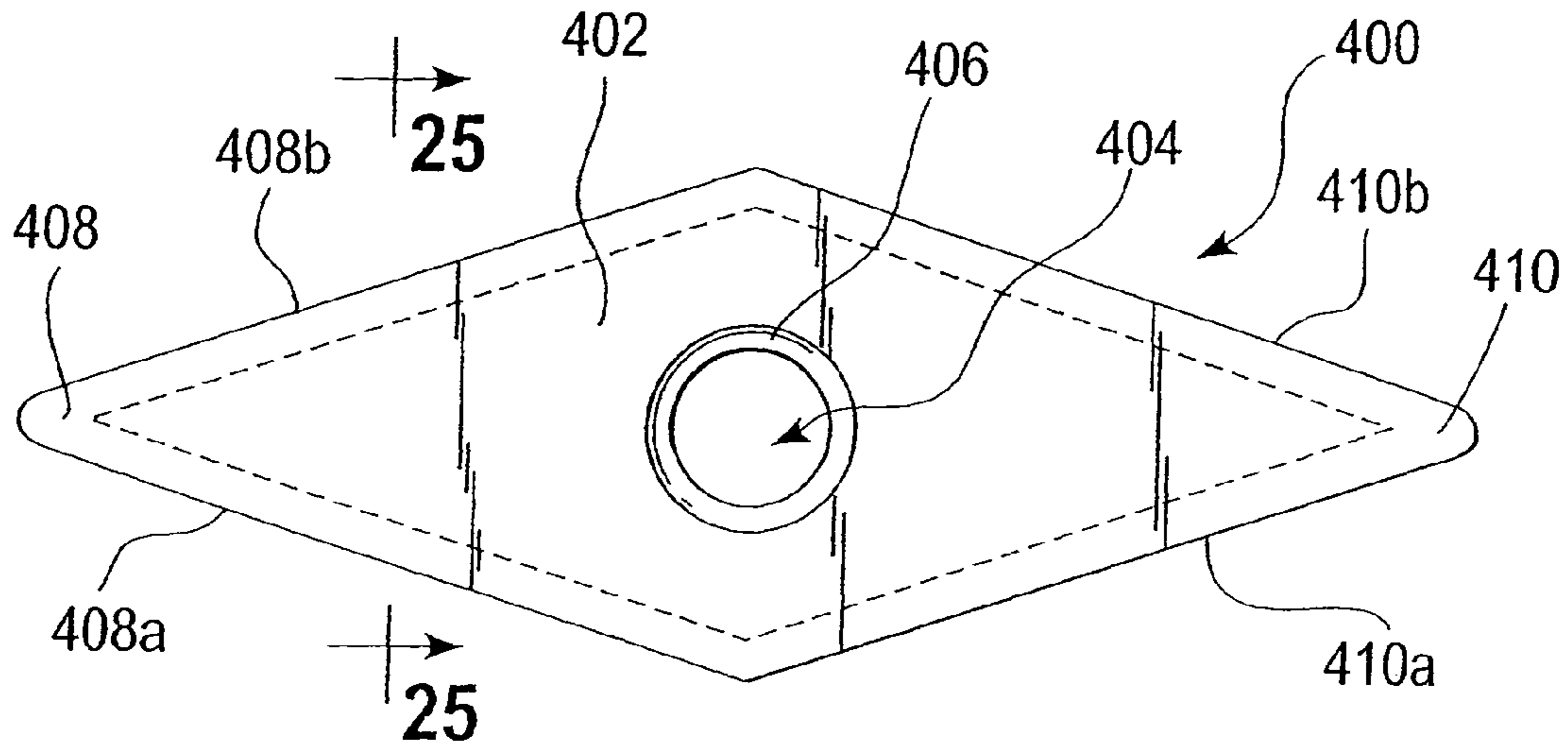


FIG. 25
PRIOR ART

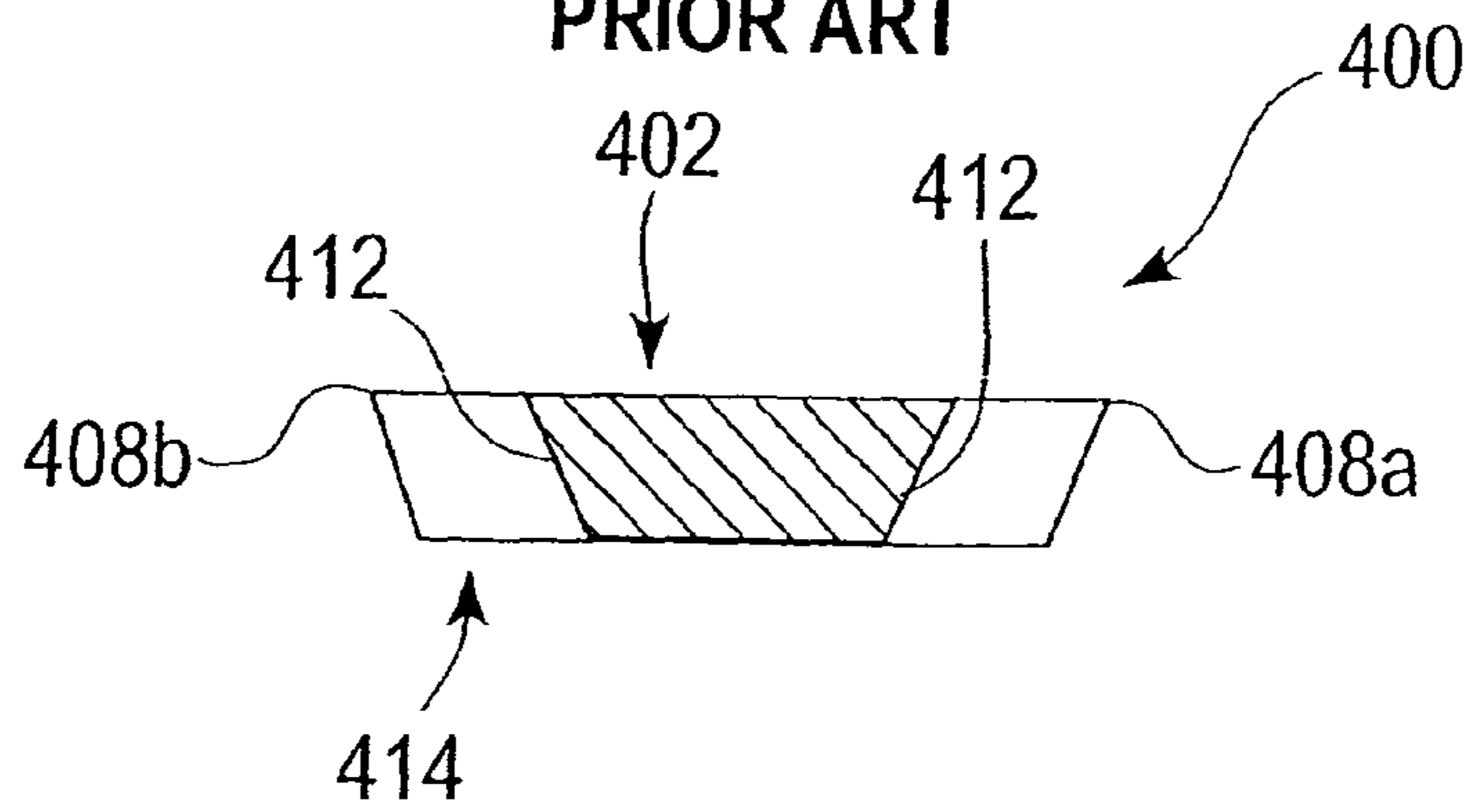


FIG. 26
PRIOR ART

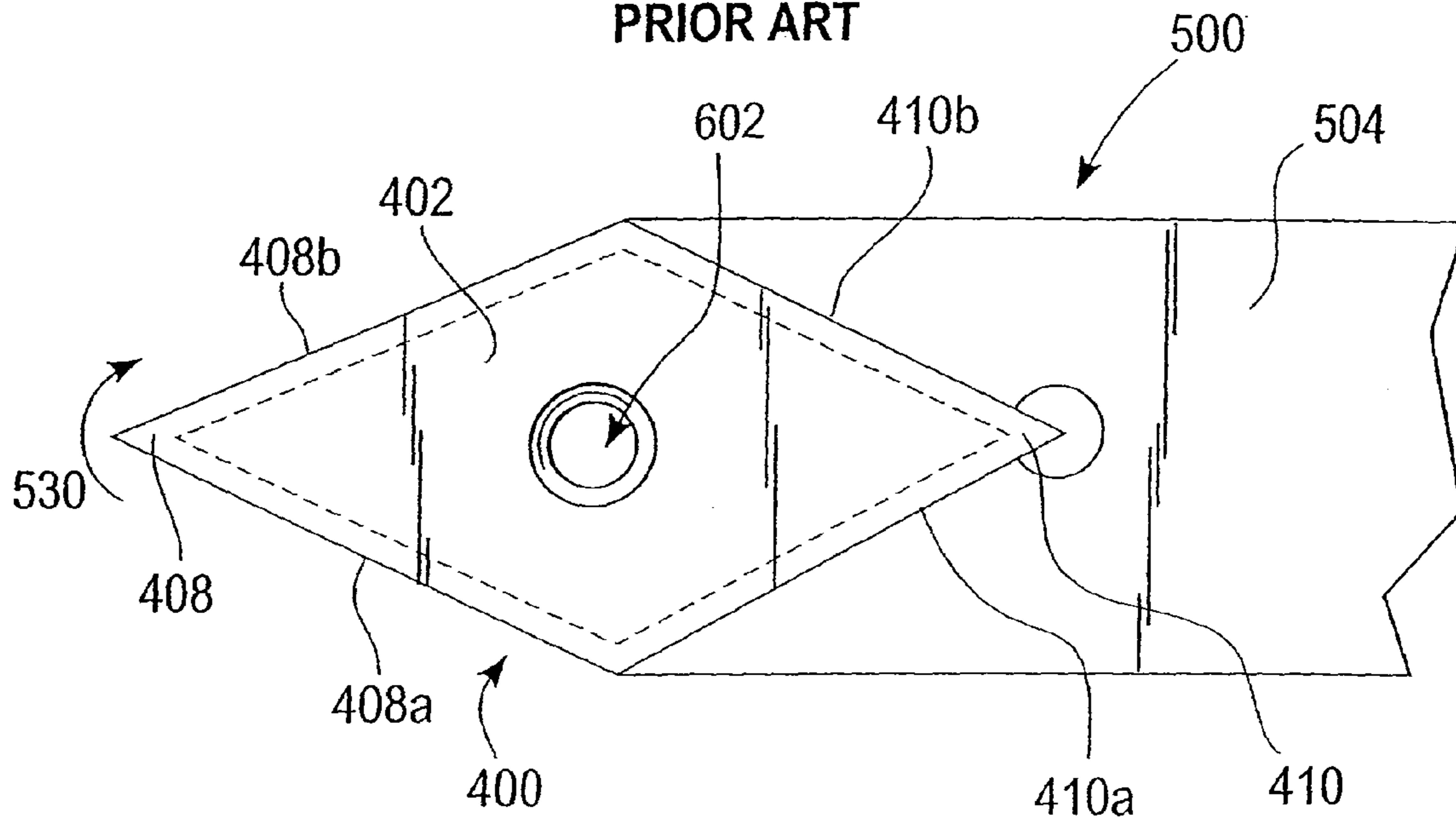
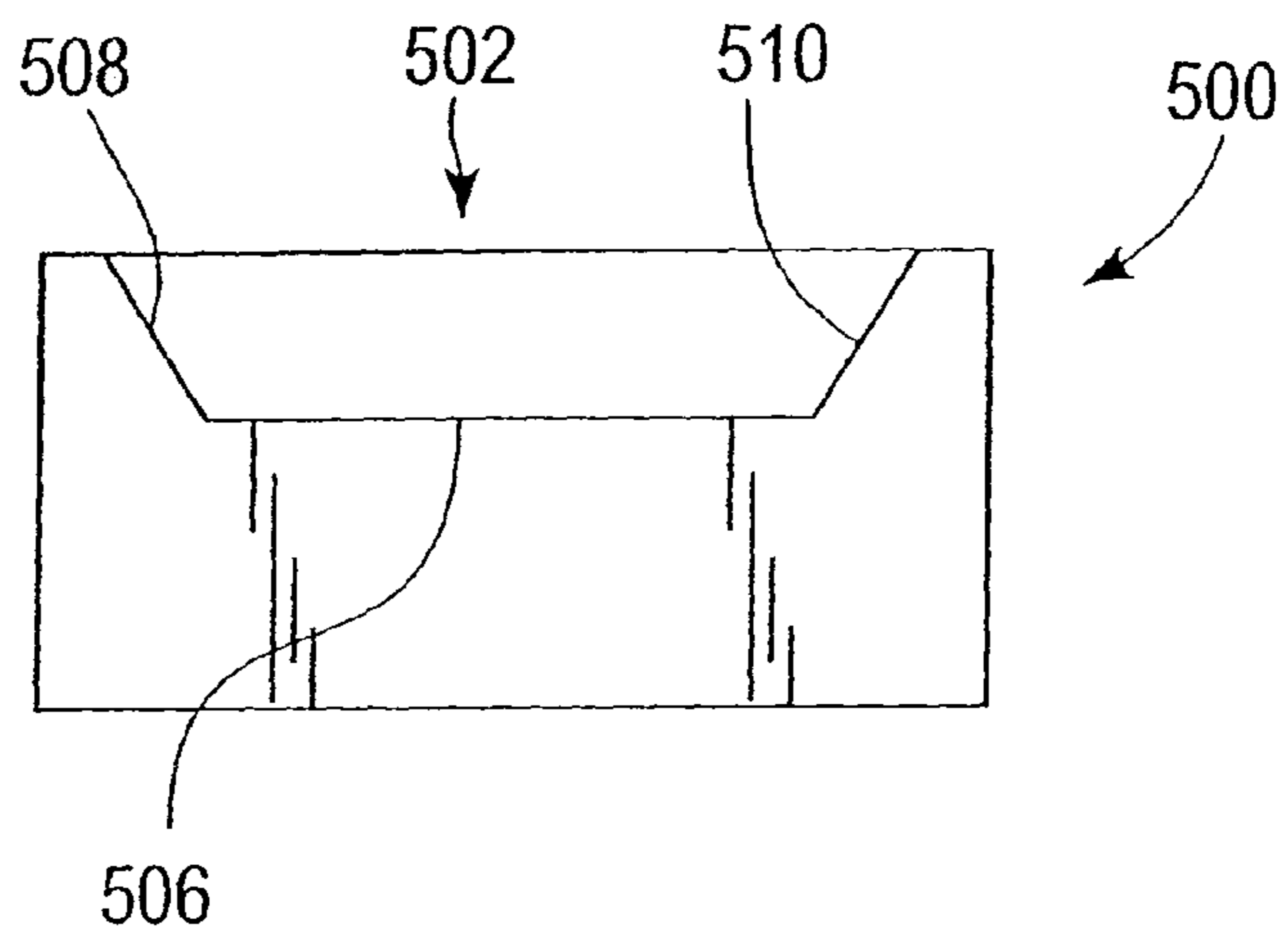


FIG. 27
PRIOR ART



INDEXABLE CUTTING TOOL INSERT FOR CUTTING TOOLS

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

This application is a continuation-in-part of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/355,448, filed Feb. 16, 2006, which is hereby incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present disclosure relates to an insert configured to be mounted to a cutting tool and also relates to the cutting tool on which the insert is mounted.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Cutting inserts are used in various cutting tools for the machining of workpieces, particularly metallic workpieces. Indexable cutting inserts, formed from material such as sintered carbides or ceramics, are often used in milling operations, such as machining aluminum, cast iron, steel, stainless steel, nickel-based alloys, cobalt alloys, and titanium. Examples of cutting tools that employ inserts in performing milling operations include face mills, end mills, slotters, and lathes.

In some conventional cutting tools, indexable cutting inserts are removably secured in insert seats disposed within pockets and spaced circumferentially around the outer periphery of a tool body. Conventional inserts may have a cutting edge about the outside of the insert, which provides a number of alternately usable cutting edges. In some cutting tools, a polygonal insert has been employed to make effective use of its corners.

Ordinarily, during a cutting operation, only a portion of the cutting edge actually cuts the workpiece. When one cutting position becomes worn, the insert may be "indexed," or repositioned, in the seat in order to bring a fresh cutting edge into the active cutting position. When all of the cutting positions are worn, the insert is discarded and replaced with a new one. In such conventional cutting tools, inserts are generally indexed by rotating them in their respective insert seats about an axis defined by the retainer hole to expose a different cutting edge.

The tool body of a conventional cutting tool often has a circular working end and a plurality of pockets, and chip gullets, positioned about the outside circumference of the working end, and each station contains a seating surface for mounting a cutting insert. An insert seat ordinarily includes one or more seating surfaces for locating, positioning, and orienting the insert in the pocket. One of many methods of retention is a common screw, which passes through a retainer hole in each insert and is threaded into a threaded mounting hole in a seating surface to retain the insert in the pocket. Each chip pocket forms a recess, or indentation, in the tool body located between adjacent insert seats. The chip pockets provide clearance regions for chips cut during the operation of the cutting tool.

A conventional threaded hole is generally perpendicular or slightly angled to the broad top and bottom faces of the insert and to the seating surface supporting the bottom face. During cutting of the workpiece, the inserts commonly experience forces that act to tend to cause the insert to be ejected from the insert pocket. The retainer fastener is the primary means by

which the insert is retained in the seat. As a result, the retainer is subject to a shear force that can result in the breaking of the retainer.

In addition, the orientation of the retainer in the insert seat requires the removal of a significant amount of the cutting tool body in front of the insert seat. More specifically, the retainer is oriented approximately perpendicular to the face of the major seating surface, i.e., the seating surface in contact with the bottom face of the insert. As a result, a significant amount of the cutting tool body in front of each major seating surface must be removed to allow the retainer to be screwed in and out of the major seating surface. The removal of this cutting tool body material makes the cross-section smaller, thereby weakening it and shortening its useful life.

In other conventional cutting tools, an indexable cutting insert can be removably secured to a seat on a fixed cutting tool, such as a lathe, and oriented so that cutting edges on the insert project beyond the fixed tool. Most often, the fixed tool is held substantially stationary during machining, while the workpiece rotates about an axis. The fixed cutting insert machines the moving workpiece to remove excess material. Conventional fixed tool inserts commonly have a cutting edge disposed around a periphery of one face of the insert to provide a number of alternately usable cutting edges. During a cutting operation, only a portion of the cutting edge actually cuts the workpiece. When one cutting position becomes worn, the insert is "indexed," or repositioned, in the seat to position a fresh cutting edge in the active cutting position. For these types of cutting tools, the insert is generally indexed by rotating the insert about an axis commonly defined through the retainer hole formed in the insert to rotate the insert about this axis to expose a different cutting edge on the periphery of the insert.

In most cases, conventional cutting tool inserts for these fixed tool applications have a generally flat shape formed by upper and lower major faces oriented generally parallel to each other. The insert has cutting edges disposed around the periphery of only one of the major faces, such as an upper major face, with side walls that taper inwardly toward a smaller, lower major face. In essence, the conventional insert generally has a truncated V-shaped cross section that is wider near the upper major face and narrower near the lower major face with cutting edges about the periphery of the upper major face.

In the tool body, pocket is formed to receive such inserts. Ordinary tool pockets include side walls inclined outwardly to mate with the inclined insert side walls and a major seating surface to retain the insert. When the cutting tool insert is mounted in the seat, the upper major surface of the insert faces away from the lower tool seating surface so that a portion of the insert cutting edges are positioned to contact the workpiece. However, because the cutting edges of prior inserts extend along the same major face, all cutting edges portions, whether or not positioned for machining, tend to have at least a portion thereof exposed to the environment, which allows the unused cutting edges to risk damage from chips, other debris, or handling.

One of the many methods used to retain the cutting insert within the tool seat is a screw, which passes through the retainer hole in the insert and threaded into a mounting hole in the major seating surface to retain the insert in the seat. Typically, the threaded mounting hole is generally perpendicular to the upper and lower major faces of the insert and to the major seating surface of the tool.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

A cutting insert for rotary or fixed tool applications is provided that has cutting edges positioned diagonally

opposed across a body of the insert where the cutting edges extend along opposite major faces of the insert body. As a result, an unused cutting edge adjacent one major face (i.e., one that is not exposed for cutting) can be protected when received in a tool body by a portion of the tool body itself at the same time as another cutting edge adjacent the other major face is exposed for cutting. Because the unused cutting edge is protected by the tool body during machining, it is not exposed to the environment and protected from damage due to flying cutting debris, handling, and the like.

In one form, the inserts herein are particularly suited for use in fixed cutting tool applications, such as in a lathe, but may be used in other machining applications as well. Due to the configuration of the cutting edges being diagonally oppositely oriented across the insert bodies and positioned along the edge of opposite major faces, the inserts can be indexed between used and unused cutting edges by flipping them end-over-end as opposed to the rotary indexing of the prior inserts about a retainer hole.

The indexable inserts herein provide advantages over existing indexable inserts for fixed tool applications, which generally have cutting edges positioned only along a single major face. Because of this construction of prior inserts, the unused cutting surfaces, when mounted in a fixed tool holder of a lathe, are still positioned at the outer surface of the cutting tool holder where all cutting edges thereof are exposed to the surrounding environment and, thus, risk damage through contact with flying cutting debris and other objects hitting against the cutting tool and insert. On the other hand, due to the configuration of the cutting edges being positioned diagonally across the cutting insert bodies of the inserts herein, where the unused cutting edge is received in a tool holder with a portion of the holder body covering the unused cutting edges, the inserts herein do not expose an unused cutting edge to such risk of damage.

In one aspect, the indexable cutting inserts herein include a block body with upper and lower opposed major faces and opposite ends thereof. In one form, the major faces of the block body are wider at a location intermediate the opposite ends than at the opposite ends themselves so that the major faces of the insert have a generally diamond-shaped configuration; however, other shapes may also be used depending on the particular application.

The insert also has opposing side walls extending between the major faces where each of the opposing side walls form intersections or junctures with each other at the opposite ends of the block body. In one form, the side walls are inclined relative to a longitudinal axis extending through the opposite ends of the body so that the side walls extends towards each other from the wider intermediate location of the block body to each of the opposite ends. In another form, the side walls form a generally wedge shape from a broad end to a narrow end.

In one form, an upper or first cutting edge is formed at an upper intersection or upper corner juncture extending along one of the opposite side walls and the upper major face. A lower or second cutting edge is formed at a lower intersection or lower corner juncture extending along the same side wall and the lower major face. As a result, in such form, the lower cutting edge is located diagonally across the side wall from the upper cutting edge so that one cutting edge can be exposed for cutting while the other cutting edge located diagonally across the body can be received in protection recesses formed in a cutting tool body for protection.

With the positioning of the cutting edges on the block body, indexing the insert to switch between the protected cutting edge and the exposed cutting edge involves reversing the

orientation of the opposed major faces and flipping the insert end-over-end to position the previously protected cutting edge in a working position for machining. By positioning the cutting edges on opposite end portions of the insert and spacing the cutting edges diagonally across the insert body, one cutting edge is exposed to a workpiece while the other is spaced away from the workpiece and can be protected within the tool body.

In contrast, previous insert designs for fixed cutting tool applications have all cutting edges on or adjacent the same major face, and when received in a tool body, these inserts have at least a portion of each cutting edge, whether or not it is exposed for cutting, susceptible to damage because they are still exposed at the outer surface of the tool body. This exposure renders the non-used cutting edge susceptible to damage prior to being used for machining. Due to this configuration of the prior inserts having all cutting edges adjacent a single major surface, these prior inserts were indexed by loosening a fastener which held the insert to the cutting tool and rotating the insert about a center axis until the unused edge was rotated into an operating position faced the workpiece. However, these prior inserts always had a portion of the unused cutting edges exposed and subject to potential damage.

In another aspect, a fixed cutting tool is provided including an indexable cutting tool insert and a cutting tool holder configured to receive the insert. The insert has upper and lower major faces, at least one side wall forming corner junctures with the major faces, and upper and lower cutting edges disposed adjacent upper and lower corner junctures of each major face and the side wall. The tool holder has a seating pocket formed in a working end of the cutting tool holder and configured for receiving the indexable cutting insert therein. The seating pocket has a seating surface for supporting one of the upper or lower major faces of the indexable cutting insert thereon so that one of the upper or lower cutting edges is exposed for cutting while the other cutting edge is protected by a body of the cutting tool holder.

To hold the insert in the pocket, the tool holder body has a side wall of the seating pocket that is inclined over the seating surface and, thus, arranged to hold the indexable cutting insert in the pocket in a direction generally normal to the seating surface. By one approach, the side wall forms a dovetail configuration to aid in holding the insert to the seating surface. A fastener may also be used. To this end, the cutting tool insert side wall may also be inclined in an opposite and complementary fashion to the dovetail inclination of the seating pocket side wall to mate with the tool body. Due to this dovetail configuration of the side walls, loads generating by the machining are applied not only through the fastener, but also through the dovetailed engagement with the insert. By contrast, prior cutting tool designs utilized generally vertical walls or outwardly inclined walls and relied solely on the fasteners as the only structure which would resist movement of the insert away from the tool body. In prior tool bodies, the walls did not resist movement of the tool in a direction normal to the tool's seating surface and the fastener itself was generally the only structure that absorbed loads from the cutting application. The inserts and cutting tools herein, on the other hand, employ the complimentary or dovetail engagement between the inclined surface of the pocket walls and the inclined sides of the insert together with the fastener to decrease the loads applied to the fastener and provide a more robust connection between the insert and the tool body.

To provide protection to the unused cutting edge of the insert, a recess is formed in the tool pocket at an intersection of the dovetailed side wall and the seating surface. This recess is arranged to form a relief area in the seating surface to

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receive either the upper or lower cutting edge that is not being used for cutting. Thus, the relief area provides protection of the non-used cutting edge during machining because it is not exposed at the outer surface of the tool as with prior inserts and cutting tools, but protected on all sides within the relief area. By providing reliefs or recesses within the tool body configured to receive the unused cutting edge, this configuration minimizes contact between the unused cutting edge and the tool body because the cutting edge is spaced from the surfaces of the tool body. Such a design also allows machining loads to be transmitted through the cutting insert body into the tool seating surface with little risk of damaging the unused or protected cutting edge.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a prior art cutting insert;
 FIG. 2 is a perspective view of a first embodiment of the cutting insert of the present invention for positive geometry cutting;
 FIG. 3 is a top plan view of the embodiment of the cutting insert shown in FIG. 2;
 FIG. 4 is a side elevational view of the embodiment of the cutting insert shown in FIG. 2;
 FIG. 5 is a front elevational view of the embodiment of the cutting insert shown in FIG. 2;
 FIG. 6 is a perspective view of a second embodiment of the cutting insert of the present invention for negative geometry cutting;
 FIG. 7 is a top plan view of the embodiment of the cutting insert shown in FIG. 6;
 FIG. 8 is a side elevational view of the embodiment of the cutting insert shown in FIG. 6;
 FIG. 9 is a front elevational view of the embodiment of the cutting insert shown in FIG. 6;
 FIG. 10 is a schematic view of a prior art chip pocket and insert;
 FIG. 11 is a schematic view of an embodiment of the chip pocket and insert of the present invention;
 FIG. 12 is a front elevational view of a first embodiment of a cutting tool of the present invention;
 FIG. 13 is a side elevational view of the cutting tool shown in FIG. 12;
 FIG. 14 is a front elevational view of a second embodiment of a cutting tool of the present invention;
 FIG. 15 is a side elevational view of the cutting tool shown in FIG. 14;
 FIG. 16 is a perspective view of another embodiment of the cutting tool insert for fixed cutting tool applications showing an upper major face and cutting edges thereon;
 FIG. 17 is a top plan view of the embodiment of the cutting tool insert of FIG. 16 showing the contrasting inclines between insert side walls;
 FIG. 18 is a side elevational view of the embodiment of the cutting tool insert of FIG. 16 showing the cutting edges and cutting points on the upper and lower major faces;
 FIG. 19 is a cross-sectional view of the embodiment of the cutting tool insert of FIG. 17 taken along line 19-19 showing an inclined bore and channels formed in the upper and lower major faces;
 FIG. 20 is a cross-sectional view of the embodiment of the cutting tool insert of FIG. 17 taken along line 20-20 showing a second pair of side walls that are broader near the lower major face of the insert;
 FIG. 21 is a top plan view of another embodiment of the cutting tool insert and fixed tool showing the insert received within a pocket in the fixed tool;

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FIG. 22 is a front elevational view of the fixed tool of FIG. 21 with the cutting tool insert removed to show reliefs and recess formed in the fixed tool opening;

FIG. 23 is a side elevational view of the cutting tool insert and fixed tool of FIG. 21 showing the unused cutting edges of the insert positioned within a recess on the fixed tool;

FIG. 24 is a top plan view of a prior art cutting tool insert for prior art fixed tool applications showing cutting edges positioned around the periphery of an upper major face;

FIG. 25 is a cross-sectional view of the prior art cutting tool insert of FIG. 24 taken along line 25-25 showing inclined side walls that are broader near the upper major face of the insert;

FIG. 26 is a top plan view of a prior art cutting tool insert and prior art fixed tool showing the exposed cutting edges around the periphery of the upper major face when the prior art insert is received within an opening in the prior art fixed tool; and

FIG. 27 is a front elevational view of the prior art fixed tool of FIG. 26 with the prior art cutting tool insert removed to show a major seating surface and inwardly sloping side walls of the prior art fixed tool.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

There is a need for a cutting insert and cutting tool body having different geometries than conventional cutting inserts and tool bodies. Such geometries allow the indexing of the insert in an unconventional manner, thereby allowing the insert to be retained in an insert seat in a more secure manner. With respect to the cutting tool body, the tool body is configured to retain the inserts more securely in their seats and to allow the reduction in the size of the chip pockets between adjacent insert seats. With respect to a fixed cutting tool, the fixed tool is configured to retain an insert more securely in the seat and protect the unused cutting edges of the insert. These features are readily seen by comparing a conventional insert and cutting tool body to an insert and tool body having features of the embodiments discussed below.

FIGS. 1 and 10 show a conventional polygonal insert 10, which is commonly used in conventional cutting tools. As seen in FIGS. 1 and 10, a conventional positive geometry insert 10 has a bottom geometric seating surface 12, which has elements that are essentially parallel to a top geometric surface 14 and has a smaller area than the top surface 14. The conventional insert 10 also includes edge surfaces, or side seating surfaces, 16 such that a cross-section of the insert 10, as shown in FIG. 10, is in the approximate shape of a trapezoid. Further, as shown in FIG. 1, the conventional insert 10 has two cutting edges 18 and 19, which are defined by the intersection of the side seating surfaces 16 with the top surface 14. In addition, the conventional insert 10 has a retainer hole 20 extending through the insert 10 such that the axis of the retainer hole 20 is perpendicular to the bottom face 12.

As can be seen from FIGS. 1 and 10, when a portion of one cutting edge 18 becomes worn, the insert 10 may be rotated about hole 20 to allow the second unworn cutting edge 19 to be used during operation of the cutting tool. Thus, with respect to conventional inserts 10, the insert 10 is commonly "indexed," i.e., repositioned so that an unworn cutting edge is placed in the active cutting position, by rotating the insert 10 about the retainer hole axis. When the second cutting edge 19 also becomes worn, the conventional insert is ordinarily discarded and replaced with an unused insert 10. As can be seen in FIG. 10, because the insert 10 is rotated about the retainer hole axis, the insert 10 remains supported by the bottom

geometric seating surface **12** both before and after indexing, and a side seating surface **16** positions the insert **10** in the pocket **22**.

FIGS. 2-5 show a first embodiment of a cutting tool insert **30**. The insert **30** is a positive geometry insert composed of a block of hard metal that acts as a suitable cutting material, such as tungsten carbide. As can be seen in FIGS. 2, 3, and 11, the insert **30** has two opposed major faces **32** and **132**, which are substantially parallel to one another and substantially identical in shape and area. Each opposed major face **32** or **132** has a truncated pie shape, in which each face **32** or **132** has a broad end **34** that tapers to a narrow end **36**.

As can be seen in FIGS. 2, 3, and 11, the insert **30** has first and second edge surfaces, or side seating surfaces, **38** and **39** that form the sides of the insert **30** and that diverge from the broad end **34** of the insert **30** to the narrow end **36**. The first and second side seating surfaces **38** and **39** act as clearance faces for rotary cutting action during the machining process. The first and second side seating surfaces **38** and **39** are oriented such that a cross-section of the insert **30**, as shown in FIGS. 5 and 11, is substantially in the shape of a parallelogram, when viewed from either the broad end **34** or the narrow end **36**. As shown in FIGS. 5 and 11, the side seating surfaces **38** and **39** define a predetermined acute angle β formed by their intersection with the opposed major faces **32** and **132**. The angle β may be virtually any angle between 0° and 90° , as desired or as dictated by the nature of the work.

As shown in FIGS. 2, 3, and 5, each opposed major face **32** or **132** is preferably divided into two or more portions: a planar surface **40** or **140** for seating in the pocket and a rake surface **42** or **142** for cutting action and chip control. The surfaces are preferably separated from one another by a plane bisecting the narrow and broad ends **34** and **36** of the insert **30**. This bisecting plane preferably divides each opposed major face **32** or **132** approximately in half.

In the first embodiment, each insert **30** includes two cutting edges—a first cutting edge **44** and a second cutting edge **45**. As shown in FIGS. 2-5 and 11, the cutting edges **44** and **45** are formed by the intersection of the side seating surfaces **38** and **39** with rake surfaces **42** and **142** of each opposed major face **32** or **132**. As shown in FIGS. 5 and 11, the intersection of side seating surfaces **38** and **39** and rake surfaces **42** forms acute angle β . The rake surfaces **42** and **142** preferably have one or more sculptured portions **46** to assist in chip removal and chip breaking during cutting tool operation, as shown in FIGS. 2 and 3. Further, as shown in FIG. 2, the cutting edges **44** and **45** each wrap around the corners at the broad end **34** of the insert **30** in a smooth geometric form, i.e., radius or chamfer, into cutting edge portions **44a** and **45a**, respectively, and end in a depression central to the broad end **34**. The corner geometry at the broad end **34** may be selected to make the corners to a specific geometric shape to accommodate the dimensions of the workpiece being cut.

The cutting edges **44** and **45** therefore are not situated on the same face, or top surface, as in conventional positive geometry inserts shown in FIGS. 1 and 10. The insert **30** therefore is not indexed by simply rotating the insert **30** about a retainer hole axis. Instead, the insert **30** is indexable by “flipping over” the insert, i.e., by repositioning the insert from one opposed major face **32** to the other opposed major face **132**, as can be seen from FIG. 11.

As shown in FIGS. 2, 3 and 5, the broad end **34** of the insert **30** is preferably indented between side seating surfaces **38** and **39** to cause the rake surfaces **42** and **142**, the cutting edges **44** and **45**, and cutting edge portions **44a** and **45a** to project from the broad end **34**. The indented portion **35** of the broad end **34** makes the corners prominent and allows the insert **30**

to make effective use of the corners of the insert **30** during operation of the cutting tool. The indented portion **35** also acts as a clearance region during operation of the cutting tool in rotary motion.

As shown in FIGS. 2, 3, 5, and 11, a retainer hole **48** is located in substantially the center of each opposed major face **32** or **132** to allow passage of an insert retainer **50** there-through, preferably in the form of a retainer screw or other fastening method. The retainer hole **48** extends through the body of the insert **30** from one opposed face **32** to the other face **132** and permits the insert **30** to be mounted to the cutting tool body. As shown in FIGS. 2, 3, and 5, the retainer hole **48** is angled so that the axis of the retainer hole **48** is not perpendicular to the opposed faces **32** and **132**. Instead, as shown in FIGS. 3 and 11, the axis defined by the retainer hole **48** is preferably parallel to the non-perpendicular side seating surfaces **38** and **39**, i.e., the axis preferably intersects the opposed major faces **32** and **132** to define the same acute angle, η , described above.

FIGS. 6-9 show a second embodiment of the insert **130** having some features that are similar to those of the first embodiment. The second embodiment has two truncated pie-shaped opposed major faces **32** and **132**, which are each divided into planar surfaces **40** and **140** and rake surfaces **42** and **142**. The second embodiment also has side seating surfaces **38** and **39**, forming the sides of the truncated pie shape. Further, the second embodiment has a retainer hole **48** extending through the insert **130**.

FIGS. 6-9 also show differences between the second embodiment and the first embodiment. For example, the second embodiment is a negative geometry insert in which the angle β , i.e., the angle formed by the intersection of the side seating surfaces **38** and **39** and the rake surfaces **42** and **142**, is not an acute angle but is instead a ninety degree angle, as shown in FIG. 9. In other words, the side seating surfaces **38** and **39** are perpendicular to the rake surfaces **42** and **142**, and a cross-section of the insert **130**, when viewed from the broad end **34** or narrow end **36**, is essentially in the shape of a rectangle, as shown in FIG. 9.

Further, the retainer hole **48** of the second embodiment is preferably elongated, as shown in FIG. 7. The elongated shape allows a retainer to be installed through the retainer hole **48** in one of two angled, non-perpendicular orientations. The two orientations of the retainer with respect to the insert **130** allow the use of four cutting edges along the insert **130**, instead of two cutting edges.

More specifically, as shown in FIG. 9, the second embodiment has a first cutting edge **44**, a second cutting edge **45**, a third cutting edge **144**, and a fourth cutting edge **145**. These cutting edges are formed by the intersection of the side seating surfaces **38** and **39** with the opposed major faces **32** and **132**. When the negative geometry insert **130** is used with a cutting tool that rotates in one direction, i.e., clockwise, the insert **130** is indexable between the first and second cutting edges **44** and **45** such that one is in the active cutting position. When both the first and second cutting edges **44** and **45** are worn, the insert **130** may be used with a cutting tool configured to rotate in the opposite direction, i.e., counterclockwise. When used with the latter cutting tool, the insert **130** is indexable such that the unworn third and fourth cutting edges **144** and **145** are alternately in the active cutting position.

The manner of indexing the second embodiment is the same as described above for the first embodiment. The insert **130** is indexed by “flipping over” the insert **30**, not by rotating it about the retainer hole axis.

In the preferred embodiments of the positive and negative geometry inserts described herein, a screw **50** is used to retain

the inserts **30** and **130**. It should be evident, however, that other fastening methods are also available for use in retaining inserts **30** and **130**. For example, and without limitation, clamps, wedges, cams, and cam-pins may also be used to hold the inserts **30** and **130** in place.

The inserts **30** and **130** described above (both positive and negative geometry embodiments) are designed for use in the cutting tool body **60** of a cutting tool, i.e., a milling machine. A first embodiment of a milling machine employing positive geometry inserts **30** is shown in FIGS. **12** and **13**, and a second embodiment is shown in FIGS. **14** and **15**. The end mill **80** (FIGS. **12** and **13**) and the face mill **90** (FIGS. **14** and **15**) each include a tool body **60** and a plurality of inserts **30**. As shown in FIGS. **12-15**, the cutting tool body **60** is substantially cylindrical with a central axis **62** about which it rotates during operation in a predetermined direction. The tool body **60** includes a coupling end portion **64** and a working end portion **66** that is disposed towards a workpiece during operation of the milling machine. The coupling end portion **64** is designed to engage the drive spindle (not shown) of the milling machine for rotation therewith. During operation, a cutting edge of each insert **30** extends beyond the tool body **60** for cutting the workpiece, and the cutting tool body **60** rotates at a predetermined speed bringing the inserts **30** into cutting engagement with the workpiece. The cutting tool body **60** rotates in a counterclockwise direction in FIGS. **12** and **14**.

As shown in FIGS. **12-15**, the working end portion **66** includes an outer periphery portion **68** defining a number of circumferentially spaced chip pockets **70** for the removed metal material to be discharged during operation in the form of chips. As shown in FIGS. **12** and **14**, the chip pockets **70** are located between adjacent insert seats **72**, which are also spaced circumferentially about the outer periphery portion **68** of the cutting tool body **60** and which serve as support surfaces for the inserts **30**. Each of the insert seats **72** is designed to position, locate, and secure one of the indexable inserts **30** for performing the cutting operation on the workpiece.

The number of insert seats **72** (and therefore the number of inserts **30**) depends on the diameter of the cutting tool body **60** and the size of the insert pocket and chip clearance **70**. The end mill **80** shown in FIGS. **12** and **13** has sixteen insert seats **72** disposed about the top of the outer periphery portion **68** of the cutting tool body **60**. The face mill **90** shown in FIGS. **14** and **15** has thirty insert seats **72** disposed about the outer periphery portion **68**. Generally, a larger number of insert pockets **70** (and therefore inserts **30**) per diameter results in a higher population of cutting edges, yielding a tool that has a longer cutting life and greater cutting speed and ability.

Features of the cutting insert **30** and chip pocket **70** are readily seen by comparing them to a conventional geometric insert **10** and conventional chip pocket **22**. FIG. **10** shows a conventional geometric insert **10** disposed in a conventional chip pocket **22**. As can be seen, the conventional insert **10** is mounted in an insert seat **24** by a retainer screw **26** extending approximately perpendicularly through the center of the insert **10** and approximately perpendicularly through a mounting hole **28** in the insert seat **24**.

In FIG. **10**, the conventional insert **10** and chip pocket **22** are on the outer periphery of a conventional tool body that is rotating in a counterclockwise direction. During operation, active first cutting edge **18** is employed to remove metal from a workpiece, and in so doing, cutting edge **18** experiences cutting forces acting downwardly and radially inwardly against edge **18**. In turn, these cutting forces act against the retainer screw **26** and the insert **10** to tend to cause the insert **10** to “flip over” and be ejected from the insert seat **24**. A shear force is thereby exerted against the retainer screw **26**, which is

the primary mechanism for keeping the insert **10** in the insert seat **24**. Also, the unused second cutting edge **19** is exposed in the chip pocket **22** to chips that may damage the second cutting edge **19**.

Further, with respect to the conventional chip pocket **22**, as shown in FIG. **10**, steel is generally removed from the conventional tool body to form the chip pocket **22** and to tap the mounting hole **28**. Steel is also removed to allow sufficient room above the insert seat **24** for access to the retainer screw **26** with a screwdriver for loosening or tightening of the retainer screw **26**. In conventional tool bodies, the axis of the mounting hole **28** is approximately perpendicular to the supporting seat surface **29** to accommodate the retainer screw **26**. This orientation, however, requires that a substantial amount of steel be removed in the conventional chip pocket **22** above the insert seat **24** to tap the mounting hole **28**, as can be seen in FIG. **10**. The removal of this substantial amount of steel weakens the tool body and limits the number of inserts **10** that may be disposed about the outer periphery of the tool body.

FIG. **11** shows the first embodiment of the insert **30** (with positive geometry) disposed in a chip pocket **70**. The insert **30** is mounted in an insert seat **72** by an insert retainer **50**, preferably a screw, which prevents insert **30** movement during cutting tool operation. As shown in FIG. **11**, the insert seat **72** includes a major seating surface **74** located underneath the insert **30** for supporting the insert **30**, and having a mounting hole **76** extending through the major seating surface **74** for receiving the insert retainer **50**. As shown in FIG. **11**, the retainer **50** extends through the center of the insert **30** and through the mounting hole **76** in a non-perpendicular manner. More specifically, the axis defined by the retainer **50** forms a predetermined acute angle, preferably acute angle β discussed above, with respect to planes defined by the opposed major faces **32** and **132** and major seating surface **74**.

As shown in FIG. **11**, the insert seat **72** also includes a minor seating surface **78** for locating and positioning the insert **30**. The minor seating surface **78** is oriented at an angle such that it is in complementary abutting engagement with a side seating surface **38** or **39** of the insert **30** to assist in locating and retaining the insert **30** in the insert seat **72**. More specifically, as can be seen in FIG. **11**, the minor seating surface **78** is preferably oriented such that it forms predetermined acute angle β when it intersects with major seating surface **74**, the same as the acute angle formed by the intersection of side seating surfaces **38** and **39** with opposed major faces **32** and **132** of the insert **30**. Further, a third seating surface is preferably in complementary abutting engagement with the narrow end **36** of the insert **30** so that the insert **30** is preferably supported in the insert seat **72** by three seating surfaces. As shown in FIG. **11**, the insert seat **72** also includes a recess **79** to allow the seating of unused cutting edge **45** and to prevent damage to the unused cutting edge **45** during operation of the cutting tool.

In FIG. **11**, the insert **30** and chip pocket **70** are on the outer periphery of a tool body **60** that is rotating in a counterclockwise direction. During operation, active first cutting edge **44** experiences cutting forces acting downwardly and radially inwardly against edge **44**. The orientation of minor seating surface **78** provides a counteracting downward and radially outward force against second edge surface **39** in response to the cutting forces exerted against first cutting edge **44**. In other words, the minor seating surface **78** provides the downward and radially outward force to resist “flipping over” of the insert **30**, thereby reducing the shear force exerted against the retainer **50**. The force needed to retain the insert **30** in the insert seat **72** is provided primarily by the minor seating surface **78**, not the insert retainer **50**. The resulting reduction

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in shear force reduces vibration, applies less torque on the retainer 50, and leads to longer life for the insert retainer 50 and for the insert seat 72.

Further, as shown in FIG. 11, the unused second cutting edge 45 is not exposed to potentially damaging loose chips cut during operation of the cutting tool. When the active first cutting edge 44 is in use, the second cutting edge 45 is essentially retracted from the cutting plane of the active edge. As shown in FIG. 11, the second cutting edge 45 is shielded within or near a corner defined by the intersection of the major seating surface 74 and the minor seating surface 78. The geometry of the insert 30 and chip pocket 70 therefore protects the unused cutting edge 45 of the insert 30, resulting in less damage to the unused edge 45 of insert 30.

As can be seen from FIG. 2, the truncated pie shape, or wedge shape, of the insert 30 also helps to protect the unused second cutting edge portion 45a. More specifically, the pie shape provides clearance between the second cutting edge portion 45a and the workpiece being cut during operation of the cutting tool. Without this clearance, the second cutting edge portion 45a would frictionally engage the workpiece when the insert 30 is cutting a workpiece using the first cutting edge 44 and portion 44a, thereby damaging the second cutting edge portion 45a. The thickness of the truncated pie wedge, i.e., the angle formed by the intersection of side seating surfaces 38 and 39 with the virtual bisecting axis, may vary significantly, so long as it provides sufficient clearance to prevent rubbing of the second cutting edge portion 45a against the workpiece.

The orientation of the chip pocket 70 provides additional advantages over conventional cutting tools. In the chip pocket shown in FIG. 11, the mounting hole 76 in major seating surface 74 is oriented at an angle, which requires that substantially less material be removed to tap the mounting hole 76 and form the insert pocket and chip clearance 70. As shown in FIG. 11, the minor seating surface 78 and underlying seat portion extend into a chip pocket wall 71. The wall 71 is dimensioned such that it extends radially outward at an angle, thereby requiring the removal of less steel from the tool body 60 to form the chip pocket 70. The angling of the retainer hole 48 and the mounting hole 76 permits angled access for a tool, such as a screwdriver, for loosening and tightening insert retainer 50, thereby requiring minimum metal removal from the cutting tool body 60 above the major seating surface 74. Reducing the amount of material that needs to be removed from the tool body 60 increases cross-sectional strength, requiring less machining of the tool body 60.

This reduction in dimension and area of the chip pocket 70 has other advantages. First, it allows the outer periphery portion 68 of the tool body 60 to be designed with more inserts 30 for a given tool diameter. The resulting reduction in the size of the chip pocket 70 allows for higher density of inserts 30 (and therefore cutting edges) in both end mill and face mill applications, as well as other applications, with resulting smoother cutting action and greater metal removal rates. The increase in cutting inserts 30 for a given tool diameter allows higher feed rates due to an increased number of cutting edges per revolution of the tool. Second, the change in dimension reduces the amount of recesses in the cutting tool, thereby increasing the cross-section of the tool body 60 and resulting in a stronger, stiffer cutting tool that is more durable and has a longer useful life.

FIG. 11 shows the first embodiment of the insert 30 disposed in a chip pocket 70, but the second embodiment (as well as other embodiments) of the insert 30 may also be used. The insert seat 72, including minor seating surface 78, can be dimensioned to accommodate the second embodiment. The

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axis of the retention hole would again be angled in both the insert 30 and insert seat 72 to provide angled access of an insert retainer 50. The used of the angled access provides the advantages described above. In addition, the retainer hole 48 is preferably elongated to accommodate an insert retainer 50 along one of two angled axes, as shown in FIG. 9. As a result, as described above, the insert 30 may employ four cutting edges (not just two): two cutting edges for use with a cutting tool rotating in a clockwise direction and two other cutting edges for use with a cutting tool rotating in a counterclockwise direction.

FIGS. 16-20 show a third embodiment of a cutting tool insert 200 for use with fixed tool applications where the cutting tool insert is held substantially fixed, such as in a lathe. The insert 200 is composed of a block body of hard metal, such as tungsten carbide, that acts as a suitable cutting material. The insert 200 may be formed into a variety of shapes, including squares, circle, hex, and parallelograms, although FIGS. 16-20 illustrate a generally diamond-shaped insert 200 suitable for use in a lathe. As seen in FIGS. 16 and 18, the cutting tool insert 200 has a lower major face 212 that is spaced from and generally parallel to an upper major face 214. The cutting tool insert 200 includes a first side wall 216 that is generally formed by side wall portions 216a, 216b extending between the upper major face 214 and lower major face 212. Similarly, a second side wall 218 is generally formed by side wall portions 218a, 218b. A first pair of side wall portions 216a, 218a taper inwardly toward each other and meet to define a first end 220, while a second pair of side wall portions 216b, 218b taper toward each other to define a second end 222, as shown in FIGS. 16 and 17.

The pairs of side wall portions 216a, 218a and 216b, 218b are also inclined relative to the upper and lower major faces 212, 214 to form intersections or corner junctures with these surfaces at either obtuse or acute angles, as best shown in FIGS. 17 and 20. More specifically, the first pair of side wall portions 216a, 218a form corner junctures with the upper major face 214 at acute angles to form a truncated "V" shape that is broader near the upper major face 214 and narrower near the lower major face 212. The second pair of side wall portions 216b, 218b are inverse to the first pair, meaning that the side wall portions 216b, 218b form corner junctures with the upper major face 214 at obtuse angles. Moreover, the side wall portions 216b, 218b form corner junctures with the lower major face 212 at acute angles to create a truncated "V" shape with the lower major face 212 that is broader near the lower major face 212 and narrower near the upper major face 214. For example, FIG. 20 illustrates the second pair of side wall portions 216b, 218b forming corner junctures 217 with the upper major face 214 at an obtuse angle Φ and forming corner junctures 219 with the lower major face 212 at an acute angle θ . Angles Φ and θ may be virtually any angle and may be different for the two side wall portions 216b, 218b. As will be discussed below, the inclines of the pairs of side wall portions 216a, 218a and 216b, 218b permit the cutting tool insert 200 to be received in a dovetail slot on the fixed tool. Accordingly, the inclines of the pairs of side walls should be selected to engage corresponding features and angles within the dovetail slot.

In a preferred form, the opposing inclines are equal, but opposite, to each other. In other words, the angles between the upper major face 214 and first side wall portions 216a, 218a are generally equivalent to the angles between the lower major face 212 and the second side wall portions 216b, 218b. Similarly, the angles between the lower major face 212 and

the first side wall portions **216a**, **218a** are equivalent to the angles between the upper major face **214** and the second side wall portions **216b**, **218b**.

As can be seen in FIGS. **16-19**, the insert **200** has upper cutting edges **224a**, **224b** formed at an upper corner juncture of the upper major face **214** and the first pair of side walls **216a**, **218a**. However, the insert **200** lacks cutting edges at the upper corner juncture of the upper major surface **214** and the second pair of side wall portions **216b**, **218b**. Instead, a set of lower cutting edges **226a**, **226b** are located at a lower corner juncture of the second pair of side wall portions **216b**, **218b** and the lower major face **212**. Thus, cutting edges **224a**, **224b** and **226a**, **226b** are positioned along opposite major faces **212**, **214** and at opposite ends of the diamond-shaped insert **200**. In other words, the cutting edge pairs **224a**, **224b** and **226a**, **226b** are not situated on the same major face and are diagonally oppositely oriented across the block body **200** from each other. The insert **200**, therefore, is not indexed by simply rotating the insert about an axis normal to the upper major face **214** as with prior inserts. Instead, the insert **200** is indexable by “flipping” the insert “end-over-end”, i.e., by repositioning the insert from the lower major face **212** to the upper major face **214**.

Additionally, the insert **200** has a first cutting point **224** formed at the intersection of the upper cutting edges **224a**, **224b** on the upper major face **214**. Similarly, a second cutting point **226** is formed at the intersection of the lower cutting edges **226a**, **226b** on the lower major face **212**. Although the cutting edges are preferably straight, the cutting edges may be of different shapes for different applications, such as to create a different size or style of cut on the workpiece. Further, one or both of the cutting points **224**, **226** may also be formed to have a radius or curve to accommodate the shape of a particular work piece. To assist in chip removal, upper and lower channels or rake portions **228**, **230** are positioned adjacent the cutting edges to assist in directing chips away from the cutting edge during operation. Rake portions may be inclined surfaces, bevels, or indentations in the major faces. Further, the pairs of side wall portions **216a**, **218a** and **216b**, **218b** may be broader adjacent the cutting edges **224a**, **224b** and **226a**, **226b** so that the incline of the side walls provides clearance for the insert **200** to function. Stated differently, the side wall portions **216a**, **218a** and **218b**, **218b** taper inward from the adjacent cutting edges **224a**, **224b** and **226a**, **226b** which tends to direct chips away from the cutting tool.

The cutting tool insert **200** also has an angled bore **250** extending through the major faces **212**, **214** and is configured to receive part of a retainer **600** to secure the insert **200** to a fixed tool, as shown in FIGS. **19** and **23**. Chamfered surfaces **252**, **254** are positioned at either end of the bore **250** for receiving a tapered portion of the retainer **600**. Bore wall **256** is a generally cylindrical wall sized to accommodate an elongate portion of retainer **600**. In an alternative embodiment, bore wall **256** includes threads or other features that engage the elongate portion of the retainer **600**. By one approach, the bore **250** extends in an inclined direction transverse to the upper and lower major faces **212**, **214** to guide the retainer **600** into a fixed tool **300** at an angle no matter which insert major face **212**, **214** is engaging the tool, as shown in FIG. **23**. When the retainer **600** is driven into the fixed tool **300**, the tapered portion of the retainer **600** will rest within one of the chamfered surfaces **252**, **254** so that the cutting tool insert **200** is held against the fixed tool **300**.

FIG. **21** shows the insert **200** securely received in the fixed tool **300**. The fixed tool **300** has a pocket **310** with inner edges **302**, **304** that form an opening **306** in a top surface **308** of the tool. The pocket **310** extends downward into the fixed tool

body and includes as flat or major seating surface **312**. When the insert **200** is placed into the pocket **310**, lower major face **212** of the cutting insert **200** is seated on the major seating surface **312** to support the insert **200** during operation. Additionally, the major seating surface **312** includes a bore **314**, preferably threaded, to receive the retainer **600** and secure the insert **200** to the major seating surface **312** of the tool **300**.

When the insert **200** is received in the tool pocket **310**, one of the insert cutting points **224** or **226** will extend away from the fixed tool **300** and be exposed to engage the workpiece. At the other end of the insert **200**, the other cutting point **224** or **226** will extend into the pocket **310** to be protected from chips and flying debris. For example, the first cutting point **224** could be selected to engage the workpiece initially, while the second cutting point **226** rests safely within the pocket **310**. Because the cutting points **224**, **226** are diagonally oppositely oriented across the tool body, as one cutting point is exposed for cutting, the other cutting point is received in a tip recess **310a** formed in the pocket **310**, which will be described further below.

The fixed tool **300** also includes dovetail walls **316**, **318** inclined at an acute angle relative to the major seating surface **312** and extend inwardly over the major seating surface **312**. The incline in the dovetail walls **316**, **318** is complementary to match the incline of insert side wall portions **216b**, **218b** (or **216a**, **218a**) so that the insert **200** can be held firmly within fixed tool **300**. When the retainer **600** is driven into bore **314**, the angled orientation tends to draw insert side wall portions **216b**, **218b** into contact with the dovetail walls **316**, **318** and seat the insert **200** within the fixed tool **300**. Moreover, the dovetail configuration also helps to hold the insert in the pocket because the dovetail engagement with the insert **200** holds the insert to the major seating surface **312** in a direction generally normal to that surface.

During operation, upper cutting edges **224a**, **224b** are exposed to remove material from a rotating workpiece, and in so doing, cutting edges **224a**, **224b** experience cutting forces acting downwardly and radially inward against the edges. In turn, these cutting forces can act against retainer **600** and the insert **200** to generate a force opposite the major seating surface **312**. One advantage of the design of dovetail walls **316**, **318** is that the incline resists upward rotation of the insert **200** caused by the rotating workpiece by exerting a downward reactive force against the side wall portions **216b**, **218b**. The transfer of loads from the insert **200** directly into the fixed tool **300** reduces the loads placed on the retainer **600**.

Turning to FIG. **22**, the major seating surface **312** includes elongate reliefs **320**, **322** positioned at an intersection of the major seating surface **312** and the dovetail walls **316**, **318**. The reliefs **320**, **322** create an elongated gap or pocket to receive the lower cutting edges **226a**, **226b** (or **224a**, **224b**) that are not exposed for cutting when the insert **200** is installed within the fixed tool **300** (or vice versa). Because cutting edges **226a**, **226b** are spaced from the major seating surface **312** when received in the pocket **310**, the various forces incurred during a machining operation are transmitted through the lower major face **212** of the insert **200** instead of through the cutting edges **226a**, **226b**. This functionality protects the unused cutting edges **226a**, **226b** from being damaged during use of the cutting point **224** and cutting edges **224a**, **224b**, as shown in FIG. **23**. Similarly, the tip recess **310a** provides a gap to receive the cutting point **226** (which is not exposed for cutting) and the fixed tool **300** also limits the forces communicated to the unused cutting point **226** because of the space formed between the cutting point **226** and the body of the fixed tool **300** in the tip recess **310a**. By one approach, the tip recess **310a** extends from the major seating

surface **312** outward through the tool body outer surface **308** to be exposed at the outer surface thereof.

After the first cutting point **224** and upper cutting edges **224a**, **224b** become dull, the insert **300** is indexed by removing the retainer **600** and flipping the insert end-over-end, in a direction generally shown by arrow **330** in FIG. **23**. The retainer **600** is reinserted through the bore **250** to seat the upper major face **214** against the major seating surface **312**. The now-dulled first cutting point **224** is positioned within the tip recess **310a** and the upper cutting edges **224a**, **224b** are received adjacent the reliefs **320**, **322**. Meanwhile, the second cutting point **226** and lower cutting edges **226a**, **226b** are fresh and ready to engage the workpiece.

As discussed above, the side wall portions **216a**, **218a** and **216b**, **218b** have opposing inclines such that side wall portions **216a**, **218a** are broader near the upper major face **214** (i.e., spaced farther apart relative to the major face and corner juncture thereof), while side wall portions **216b**, **218b** are broader near the lower major face **212**. The opposite inclines permit each pair of side walls **216a**, **218a**, and **216b**, **218b** to engage the dovetail walls **316**, **318** when the insert **200** is indexed by flipping end-over-end. More particularly, when the insert **200** was first positioned within the fixed tool **300**, lower major face **212** faced major seating surface **312** and the broader parts of side wall portions **216b**, **218b** were near the major seating surface **312**. After the insert **200** was indexed, the upper major face **214** now faces the major seating surface **312** and the broader parts of side wall portions **216a**, **218a** are near the major seating surface **312**. Thus, the opposing inclines of the pairs of side walls permit the insert **200** to be indexed by flipping end-over-end while still providing a firm engagement with dovetail walls **316**, **318** in the fixed tool **300**.

Features of the insert **200** and fixed tool **300** are readily seen by comparing them to a conventional cutting tool insert **400** and conventional fixed tool **500**. FIG. **24** shows a conventional insert **400** having an upper major face **402** and a bore **404** formed therethrough. The bore **404** extends through the upper major face **402** at an angle that is perpendicular to the upper major face **402**. A chamfered surface **406** configured to receive the head of a retainer **602** extends around the circumference of bore **404**. The conventional insert **400** also includes first and second cutting points **408**, **410** both positioned on the upper major face **402**. The first cutting point **408** is formed at the juncture of first cutting edges **408a**, **408b**, while the second cutting point **410** is formed at the juncture of second cutting edges **410a**, **410b**. As shown in FIG. **25**, the conventional insert **400** has a lower major face **414** extending parallel to the upper major face **402**, with inwardly sloping side walls **412** that join the upper and lower major faces **402**, **414**. However, the inwardly sloping side walls **412** have a uniform inward slope about the entire periphery of the conventional insert **400**. In other words, the spacing between the side walls **412** are all broader near the upper major face **402** than near the lower major face **414** in these prior inserts.

In FIG. **26**, the conventional insert **400** is installed into a conventional fixed tool **500**. The conventional fixed tool **500** has an opening **502** formed in upper surface **504** for receiving the conventional insert **400**. The retainer **602** is inserted through the bore **404** and threaded into an aperture in the major seating surface **506**. The major seating surface **506** engages the lower major face **414** of the conventional insert **400**, while the outwardly inclined surfaces **508**, **510** mate with the inwardly sloping side walls **412**, as shown in FIG. **27**. From FIGS. **25-27**, it is apparent that the inclined surfaces **508**, **510** lack an engagement with the conventional insert **400** which keeps the insert **400** seated within the opening **502** and resists bending moments applied to the insert **400** by a rotat-

ing workpiece. Instead, only the retainer **602** fixes the conventional insert **400** against the major seating surface **506**.

In use, FIG. **26** shows that the first cutting point **408** and first cutting edges **408a**, **408b** of the conventional inserts are exposed to the rotating workpiece and any debris generated therefrom during machining. The second cutting point **410** is also located on the upper major face **402**; therefore, the second cutting point **410** and second cutting edges **410a**, **410b** remain exposed to the rotating workpiece and may be damaged although they are currently not being used. To index the conventional insert **400**, the retainer **602** is removed and the insert **400** is rotated about an axis defined by the bore **404** in the direction generally shown by arrow **530** in FIG. **26**. The conventional insert **400** is re-seated in the opening **502** before retainer **602** again secures the insert **400** to the major seating surface **506**. Regardless of whether the first or second cutting point **408**, **410** is facing the workpiece, the lower major face **414** always seats against the major seating surface **506**.

As should be evident, a number of variations in the cutting tool and inserts are possible. For example, the cutting tool bodies may be fashioned with a variety of cutting diameters and number of inserts. Also, as shown in FIG. **13**, the cutting tool may use multiple rows and other arrangements of inserts on the cutting tool. Further, the inserts are not limited for use with the type of machining tools described above or mentioned in the background but may be used in virtually any metal removal operation, also including without limitation, boring bars, slotters, and broach tools. These considerations will be dictated by the nature of the work to be performed.

While there have been illustrated and described particular embodiments of the present invention, it will be appreciated that numerous changes and modifications will occur to those skilled in the art, and it is intended in the appended claims to cover all those changes and modifications which fall within the true spirit and scope of the present invention.

What is claimed is:

1. An indexable cutting insert comprising:

- a block body having opposite ends;
- opposite side surfaces of the block body extending between the ends;
- opposite major surfaces of the block body extending between the ends;
- a first pair of side edges extending between one end and the other end at junctures between one of the opposite side surfaces and the opposite major surfaces;
- a second pair of side edges extending from the one end to the other end at junctures between the other of the opposite side surfaces and the opposite major surfaces;
- a first cutting edge formed on one of the first pair of side edges to extend from the one end at the juncture of the one opposite side surface and one of the opposite major surfaces; and
- a second cutting edge formed on one of the second pair of side edges to extend from the other end at the juncture of the other of the opposite side surfaces and the other of the opposite major surfaces so that the first and second cutting edges are diagonally oppositely oriented across the block body from each other.

2. The indexable cutting insert of claim **1** wherein the block body has a longitudinal axis extending between the opposite ends, the opposite major surfaces of the block body being wider at a location intermediate the opposite ends than at the opposite ends.

3. The indexable cutting insert of claim **1** wherein the opposite major surfaces of the block body are wider at one end of the body than at the other end so that the opposite side surfaces of the block body taper inward toward one another.

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4. The indexable cutting insert of claim 2 wherein the opposite side surfaces each include a pair of side wall portions, one of the side wall portions inclined relative to one of the opposite major surfaces to form an acute angle therebetween and the other of the side wall portions inclined relative to the other of the opposite major surfaces to form an acute angle therebetween.

5. An indexable cutting insert for cutting tool applications, the indexable cutting insert comprising:

a block body having upper and lower opposed major faces and opposite ends thereof with a longitudinal axis extending between the opposite ends, the major faces of the block body being wider at a location intermediate the opposite ends than at the opposite ends;

opposite side walls extending between the major faces, the side walls forming junctures with each other at the opposite ends;

an upper corner juncture between one of the opposite side walls and the upper major face and a lower corner juncture between the one side wall and the lower major face; an upper cutting edge extending along the upper juncture between the intermediate location and one of the opposite ends; and

a lower cutting edge extending along the lower juncture between the intermediate location and the other of the opposite ends such that the lower cutting edge is located diagonally across the one side wall from the upper cutting edge.

6. The indexable cutting insert of claim 5, wherein the insert includes:

another upper corner juncture between the other of the opposite side walls and the upper major face;

another lower corner juncture between the other of the opposite side walls and the lower major face;

another upper cutting edge extending along the other upper corner juncture between the intermediate location and the one of the opposite ends; and

another lower cutting edge extending along the other lower corner juncture between the intermediate location and the other of the opposite ends such that the other lower cutting edge is diagonally across the other opposite side wall from the other upper cutting edge.

7. The indexable cutting insert of claim 5, wherein the one of the opposite side walls includes a pair of side wall portions each of which extend from the intermediate location towards one of the opposite ends of the block body, one of the pair of side wall portions forming a corner juncture with the upper major face at an acute angle and the other of the pair of side wall portions forming a corner juncture with the lower major face at an acute angle such that the side wall portions are inclined relative to the upper major face in opposite directions.

8. The indexable cutting insert of claim 7, wherein the one of the pair of side wall portions forms a corner juncture with the lower major surface at an obtuse angle and the other of the pair of side wall portions forms a corner juncture with the upper major surface at an obtuse angle.

9. The indexable cutting insert of claim 5, wherein each of the opposite ends includes a cutting tip thereon such that the cutting tips are diagonally oppositely oriented across the block body from each other.

10. The indexable cutting insert of claim 5, wherein the major faces include a raked surface portion proximate to cutting edges to assist in directing chips away from the cutting edges during machining.

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11. A cutting tool configured for use with an indexable cutting insert and for machining moving workpieces, the cutting tool comprising:

a cutting tool holder adapted to be held in a fixed relation to a moving workpiece;

an indexable cutting insert having upper and lower opposed major faces and a side wall extending between the major faces, an upper cutting edge extending along a portion of an upper corner juncture between the side wall and the upper major face, and a lower cutting edge extending along a portion of a lower corner juncture between the side wall and the lower major face;

a seating pocket formed in a working end of the cutting tool holder and configured for receiving the indexable cutting insert therein;

a seating surface of the seating pocket for supporting one of the upper or lower major faces of the indexable cutting insert thereon so that one of the upper or lower cutting edges is exposed for cutting;

a side wall of the seating pocket inclined over the seating surface and arranged to hold the indexable cutting insert in the pocket in a direction generally normal to the seating surface;

a recess in the pocket at an intersection of the side wall and the seating surface arranged to form a relief area in the seating surface to receive the other of the upper or lower cutting edges in the relief area for protection thereof during machining with the exposed cutting edge of the indexable cutting insert.

12. The fixed cutting tool of claim 11, wherein the cutting tool holder has a tool axis extending therealong and a transverse axis extending normal to the seating surface, and the side wall of the seating pocket includes a pair of opposed side walls that incline toward each other in the direction of the transverse axis and form a dovetail arrangement relative to the seating surface to hold the indexable cutting insert in the pocket in a direction generally normal to the seating surface.

13. The fixed cutting tool of claim 12, wherein the indexable cutting insert has opposite ends thereof with each end of the insert including a cutting tip thereon oriented diagonally across the block body of the cutting insert, the pair of opposed side walls on the cutting tool holder extend toward each other in the direction of the tool axis and form a tip recess adjacent an intersection of the opposed side walls, the tip recess arranged and sized to receive one of the cutting tips therein for protection with the other cutting tip exposed for cutting.

14. A method of indexing an indexable cutting insert on a cutting tool body, the method comprising:

mounting a lower major surface of the indexable insert on a seat of the cutting tool body;

exposing one cutting edge of the indexable insert adjacent an upper major surface thereof beyond a periphery of the cutting tool body for cutting therewith so that the upper major surface is spaced further from the seat than the lower major surface;

orienting another cutting edge of the indexable insert adjacent the lower major surface thereof inward of the periphery of the cutting tool body for protecting the other cutting edge during cutting with the one cutting edge; and

flipping the indexable insert to reverse the orientation of the upper and lower major surfaces so that the upper major surface of the insert is mounted on the seat and the lower major surface is spaced further from the seat than the upper major surface to reorient the cutting edges so that the other cutting edge adjacent the lower major surface is exposed beyond the cutting tool body periph-

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ery for cutting therewith and the one cutting edge adjacent the upper major surface is oriented inwardly of the cutting tool body periphery.

15. The method of claim 14 wherein orienting the other cutting edge inward of the periphery of the cutting tool body includes placing the other cutting edge adjacent a relief formed in the seat for protection.

16. A method of indexing an indexable cutting insert on a cutting tool body, the method comprising:

mounting one of a pair of opposite major surfaces of the indexable insert on a seat of the cutting tool body;
 exposing one cutting edge of the indexable insert beyond a periphery of the cutting tool body for cutting therewith;
 orienting another cutting edge inward of the periphery of the cutting tool body for protecting the other cutting edge during cutting with the one cutting edge; and

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flipping the indexable insert and mounting the other major surface of the insert on the seat to reorient the cutting edges so that the other cutting edge is exposed beyond the cutting tool body periphery for cutting therewith and the one cutting edge is oriented inwardly of the cutting tool body periphery,

wherein mounting the opposite major surface of the indexable insert on the seat of the cutting tool body includes passing a fastener through a bore of the indexable insert into the seat and drawing an inclined surface of the indexable insert into contact with a complimentary inclined wall of the seat.

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